

Paying homage to "the god of the snowy mountain". **Page 16**



Less than 40 yuan is enough to get stuffed at pizza buffet. **Page 14**



This happy subway troubadour has no sad songs. **Page 9**



BEIJING TODAY

FRIDAY JANUARY 10, 2003

NO. 87

CN11-0120

HTTP://BJTODAY.YNET.COM

No More Playing Doctor

Beijing University to reject part-time PhD students



The door of Beijing University is only open to elite minds. Photo by Photocome

By Xiao Rong

To ensure the purity and quality of its PhD programs, China's top-rated university is turning away "part-time" doctoral students who cannot focus their full attention on their academic work.

Beijing University's College of Economics and Guanghua School of Management both recently announced that as of the first term of 2003, they will no longer grant admission to doctoral program applicants that want to pursue degrees while maintaining full-time employment.

Though this move has only been made by these two colleges, it has become the focus of heated media attention and even been called the first blow in a new fight against "degree corruption" in China's institutions of higher education.

Degree corruption is a term given to a practice common among universities nationwide since the late 1980s. It refers to a specific body of part-time students, mainly made up of government officials and entrepreneurs, who easily earn Master's or doctoral degrees despite doing relatively little academic work. Moreover, such students have their tuition fees paid by their work units or employers or totally waived by the universities.

One major reason for the development of the degree corruption problem has been attributed to the government's policy of requiring strong academic backgrounds for higher positions in order to improve the quality of top levels of leadership.

According to an editorial run in *Beijing Youth Daily* on January 5, "If the practice of these two colleges of Beijing University was expanded to all universities in China, that would go a long way towards fighting degree corruption by preventing part-time graduate students from using public money to pursue degrees."

Both schools, however, told *Beijing Today* that their basic intent in launching the plan was to improve the overall quality of their doctoral programs, not to specifically address the degree corruption issue.

Raising doctoral standards

"With the aim of ensuring all doctoral students have sufficient time to conduct their research work, we have decided to only enroll those students that will be able to devote themselves full-time to their studies," said Huang Guitian, a teacher from the College of Economics of Beijing University.

He added that in the past, the college had to make some adjustments to its academic schedule, for instance moving some courses to weekends or holidays, to accommodate the needs of part-time doctoral students.

"That led to inconveniences in our daily arrangements," Huang continued. "The lack of sufficient time and energy among some part-time students to really go after their studies was the main issue."

The College of Economics is now considering redesigning its graduate programs to raise the requirements for earning advanced degrees.

The decision to no longer enroll part-time doctoral students is just one part of the college's overall reform efforts, Huang stressed.

The Guanghua School of Management has stated it had similar motives in making the policy change.

"Starting as early as 1998, our school stipulated that tutors under the age of 50 are not allowed to instruct part-time doctoral students, and that policy was later extended to all our tutors," said Tu Ping, vice president of the Guanghua School.

As a result of demands at work, most former part-time doctoral students missed many classes, Tu added. He said that with the school's increasing emphasis on academic rigor, it has become all but impossible for part-time students to keep up with course work.

According to Tu, the school will double the number of required courses while also raising the standards for examination and dissertation performance.

"Our goal is to strengthen management of the awarding of degrees to guarantee the quality of our graduate education, and that demands the absolute devotion of students to their research," he said.

Tu continued that officials or entrepreneurs that failed to concentrate on their studies would probably end up eliminated through competition anyway.

The struggles of part-timers

Beijing Today interviewed two doctoral students from the Guanghua School of Management, both of whom expressed approval of the new enrollment standards.

"It's really difficult for part-time students to earn PhDs since they can't fully focus on their studies," said Tian Kun, who enrolled in the Guanghua School in 2000 as a doctoral student after earning a Master's degree at Beijing University.

Tian passed his doctoral qualification exams, required before starting thesis work, after acquiring over 40 credits in his first year-and-a-half of studies, a course load he said was a heavy burden even as a full-time student.

"I think the school's emphasis on strengthening academic work is a good way to help us build up a strong base for our dissertations. Part-time students who lack sound knowledge of theory can greatly benefit from all the required coursework," added Tian.

Bao Minggang, another doctoral student at the Guanghua school, said, "Even though some part-time doctoral students manage to pull off studying and working at the same time, it's definitely more dif-

ficult for them to fulfill all the requirements because they are more easily distracted."

In his view, the ease with which some part-time students have received higher degrees at some universities is completely unfair.

"This kind of degree corruption hurts us full-time graduate students, because we may lose enthusiasm in devoting all our time to our academic work," said Bao.

Both men, however, admitted that most of their part-time classmates are serious about their studies, though they are sometimes unable to attend classes due to work obligations.

A rising trend

While taking measures to improve doctoral education, these two schools have emphasized that their decision in no way means they are turning away experienced people who wish to continue their studies in order to further their career development.

"We only require prospective students to give up their current jobs during their three or four years of graduate study so that they can be fully focused," said Huang Guitian.

Beijing University is not the only prominent university to take such steps in order to improve the quality of its doctoral education system.

Renmin University of China is considering requiring working doctoral candidates to promise to devote at least one year to full-time study, according to Liu Dachun, vice president of graduate studies at the university.

He stressed that whether a doctoral candidate studies full-time or part-time, the key element to academic success is the strictness of a university's overall graduate program.

"I think the requirement that doctoral students study full-time will become a trend sooner or later," said Tian Kun. "The decision of our school at least conveys the message that we will turn away doctoral candidates who cannot guarantee absolute devotion to their studies or who hope to bump along to a degree."

EDITOR: LIU FENG DESIGNER: LI SHI

Get the Cluck Out

KFC closes branch in Beihai Park

By Xiao Rong

The Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant that has been operating for 10 years in Beihai Park, a former imperial garden built over 900 years ago, closed its doors for good on Wednesday.

"We are closing our Beihai branch in keeping with our contract with the park. Both sides decided not to continue cooperation based on mutual understanding," said a statement released by Beijing Kentucky Company the same day.

However, a KFC public relations officer who requested anonymity revealed the company will try to keep up with local demand by finding an appropriate nearby location for another restaurant.

Of the 90 KFC branches in the capital, the Beihai outlet, which opened in the Shuanghong pavilion in 1993, was the only one located in a park, the officer added.

In 2000, some members of the Beijing committee of the Chinese People's Consultative Conference put forth a proposal that a foreign fast food restaurant should be considered an inappropriate resident of an imperial garden.

That bill sparked heated

debate among local residents about the actual impact of the restaurant on the ancient garden. The Beijing Garden Bureau then ordered the administration of Beihai Park not to extend its contract with KFC, which came to an end earlier this year.

Ms. Miao, director of the management office of Beihai Park who declined to give her full name, told *Beijing Today* that terminating cooperation like this is completely ordinary commercial behavior, and declined to comment on whether the restaurant has had an unfavorable impact on the image of the park.

"The KFC branch in Beihai undoubtedly is out of keeping with the style of an imperial garden," said Wang Zhongying, press official of the Beijing Garden Bureau.

The move echoes the stipulations of the new Statute on Beijing's Parks that went into effect on January 1. According to that document, businesses that operate in parks must be kept in harmony with the overall landscape.

The KFC Beihai branch was the first restaurant in a city park to be closed after the issuing of the new statute.



The once-buzzing KFC Beihai branch meets a quiet end on Wednesday. Photo by Binger

Reorganization Regulated

By Ema Ma

The interpretations to the reorganization-related civil lawsuit issued by the Supreme Court will go into effect from February 1.

Since the trial from 1993 to transform government-administered state enterprises to more efficient free enterprises with clearly defined ownership, many companies have taken advantage

of various loopholes to strip high-quality assets from the original companies. At the same time, they have left huge amounts of overdue debts, redundant employees and other non-profit making assets of the original parent company in order to dodge debts, and avoid obligations to the retired employees, and even cashed the state assets for own use.

Numerous bad debts and improperly placed unemployed have caused social unrest in some areas. "The original good intentions have been distorted as an excuse to cast aside the burden," one official described the status of the reorganization.

Furthermore, the fact that lacking supervision from relevant debtors, judiciaries and notarization has led to a

rise in corruption, which some local governments have approved reorganization plans in a haphazard manner.

Aiming at the most common disputes surrounding the question of who assumes the debts after reorganization? The interpretation clearly states: the new company will assume the related obligations with the original company.

Bidding Closes for Olympic Projects

By Xiao Rong

A total of 43 bidding papers were submitted by the January 5 deadline for the seven Beijing Olympic construction projects invited for international bids, the city planning commission announced yesterday.

The National Gymnasium and Olympic Village proved the most popular projects, with 13 tendering documents submitted. The National Sports Stadium followed, attracting seven competitors for the final round of bidding.

Only two bidding papers were received for the Beijing Country Equestrian Park, which will be located in Shunyi district. A second round of bidding may be organized, in accordance with China's bidding law, which specifies a minimum of three bidding candidates.

Final candidates for the second round of bidding will be selected from the 43 tendering papers by February, by an evaluation panel consisting of domestic and foreign experts.

Companies Get Assistance Chasing Olympic Business

By Shan Jinliang

As of Wednesday, companies from Zhongguancun Science Park have a new channel to participate in business opportunities arising from the Beijing 2008 Olympics, with the establishment of a coordination committee between the park and the Beijing Olympics Organizing Committee.

The 23-member committee, called Olympics-Zhongguancun Coordination Committee was announced at the fifth Zhongguancun Promotion Fair and Investment Negotiation Meeting. With the slogan "scientific Olympics," the 2008 Beijing Olympics Organizing Committee hopes to inject more technological elements to ensure a great Games.

"It will serve as a bridge between the science park and the Olympics Organizing Committee," said Chen Li, director of the committee's office, "On one hand, we will collect the project information and provide it to the companies in the park, on the other hand, we will select some well-performing projects or companies and recommend them to the market promotion department of the Organizing Committee."

The committee will also help develop Olympics-oriented projects, and will help park companies get contact with companies who have offered projects for the Olympics.

The committee members are from the China Academy of Social Sciences, professional associations, the Science Park's professional associations, and the Beijing Development Area.

Zhao Mulan, chairwoman of the committee, said the work model and the specific work content is still not determined, as it has just been established. For the whole afternoon, she and her colleagues listened to reports by senior officials from the Beijing Olympic Organizing Committee, and she said all the specific work on Olympics projects will start soon.

Durex Victor in Condom Dispute

By Xiao Rong

Durex has defeated local rival Jissbon, not in a commercial battle, but in a legal dispute.

The lawsuit between the two best known condom brands in China ended last Wednesday, with the Beijing No. 1 Intermediate People's Court ordering Wuhan Jissbon Sanitary Products to pay compensation of 100,000 yuan to Qingdao London International Latex for its unlawful competition.

As reported in *Beijing Today* on November 29, Qingdao London International, the maker of Durex condoms in China, accused Wuhan Jissbon last April of making false claims and using material on its websites plagiarized from its own, and demanded damages of up

to five million yuan.

The court ruled, however, that Qingdao London International had not presented enough evidence to justify its demand for five million yuan in compensation.

"The fact that we got compensation was much more important than how much we were paid," claimed Dong Yongsan, lawyer for the plaintiff. "The final verdict clearly shows that Jissbon violated the rights of Durex through false claims."

He also expressed concern over the lack of specific laws in China allowing for the severe punishment of those who violate the legal rights of others.

Wuhan Jissbon's representatives expressed dissatisfaction over the verdict, saying they would file an appeal.



It Came from Outer Space!

Articles carried on China's unmanned spaceship, *Shenzhou IV*, are removed from the capsule in Beijing on Wednesday. The spaceship landed successfully in the designated area, with crops, seeds, stamps and other articles inside, after completing its six day and 18 hour mission, orbiting the earth 108 times.

(Xinhua Photo)

Fees Jump for EMBA

By Shan Jinliang

Shanghai Fudan University has increased its fees for its Executive Master of Business Administration program (EMBA) from 230,000 to 238,000 yuan. The increase brings it into line with the fees charged by China Europe International Business School (CEIBS), which established China's first EMBA program in 1995.

EMBA programs usually consist of weekend courses tailored to meet the needs of mid-level managers who have proven records in business and who are ready to move up the corporate ladder.

Unlike traditional full-time MBA programs, which are designed for students who have recently acquired their undergraduate degrees and have little or no management experience, the EMBA is structured to accommodate seasoned business professionals who can bring a wealth of knowledge and experiences to the classroom.

Several other EMBA classes have also raised their admission fees to over 200,000 yuan, since the State Council's Degree Committee approved 30 EMBA classes in August 2002, including Beijing, Tsinghua and Fudan Universities.

The annual admission for Beijing and Tsinghua universities' programs was 250,000

yuan, and the admission to the joint EMBA class run by Fudan and the University of Washington, was raised from 300,000 yuan in 2002 to 330,000 yuan in 2003.

The high admission fees seem to be dampening the enthusiasm of China's top managers to enroll in such courses. Yang Xiaoyan, director of Beijing University's EMBA class, said the admission was not a decisive factor for someone to choose an EMBA class, since the candidates are able and willing to pay such a fee.

Yang said they had to choose 50 members from 200 to 300 applicants in its branches of Shanghai and Shenzhen last November. Wang Xiaozhong, marketing and PR director of CEIBS said his class was still as popular as before, and they would recruit one from every three.

But insiders warn the high admissions of some domestic EMBA classes could prove counter-productive, as they are unable to provide sufficient and qualified faculty members.

Wang said the EMBA teaching staff are still lacking in many developed countries, and the lack of qualified staff is more severe in China. Lack of qualified teaching staff will lead to a downgrading of the quality of EMBA classes, and as a result, a reduction in their ability to attract new participants.

Regulation Implemented on Foreign Criminals

By Su Wei

The Regulation on Foreign Criminals' Meeting and Communication effective as of January 1, 2003 is the first written specified regulation set by the Ministry of Justice since 1949.

"In the past few years, the increased opportunities for foreigners to extend their relation with China in the areas such as culture and commerce would incur the increased possibilities for them to violate Chinese laws and regulations," says a staff member of the Bureau of Prison Administration of the Ministry of Justice.

"By the end of 2001, the total number of foreign criminals in Chinese prisons exceeded 1,100. These people are almost from every continent."

He said the handling of foreign criminals has long been on the basis of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations and joint conventions concluded with other countries, as well as the international practice.

In the regulations, diplomatic and consular officials are requested to provide a written application with detailed information to the provincial level prison administration bureaus, whenever they apply for meeting the criminals from their countries.

Relatives or guardians of these criminals are requested to provide a written application to these bureaus through their embassies and consulates when they apply for the first meeting. The information attached is the same as those for the diplomatic and consular officials.

Responses to officials meeting with criminals are to be given within five working days in writing. For the approved ones, detailed arrangement and the confirmation to the application are attached.

Responses to relatives or guardians upon the first time are also to be given within five working days in writing. For the approved ones a confirmation is attached. For the consequent meetings the responses are to be given within two working days.

There are usually one or two such meetings with no more than three people involved. Each lasts around one hour. If there are demands for more or a longer meeting, or with more people involved, the prison would give certain consideration.

Letters between the foreign criminals and their relatives or guardians are to be posted once having passed examination.

Bring Your Credit Card

By Ema Ma

"Consume with credit cards," will be the hot slogan of 2003, if Beijing's municipal government has anything to do with it.

By 2004, all service establishments in major business districts, tourism sites and other places around the proposed Olympic facilities will accept credit cards. In other areas, more than 50 percent of service establishments with an annual turnover of over 500,000 yuan will accept credit cards. The proportion of consumption using credit cards compared to total consumption will increase from five percent in 2001 to 20 percent. The number of automatic teller machines will increase to 3,000.

By 2008, 90 percent of business establishments in Beijing will accept credit cards, and card consumption will account for 25 percent of total consumption, according to the detailed blueprint the government has drawn up for credit card development in Beijing.

Shortcut for Passport Services

By Su Qiang / Ivy Zhang

Starting from Monday, Beijingers who require passports to go abroad for personal reasons may no longer need to visit the Public Security Bureau Entry-Exit Administration, near the Lama Temple.

The administration set up two new passport service posts in Zhongguancun, Haidian district and the Central Business District in Chaoyang district.

The Haidian post went into operation Monday and the Chaoyang post is expected to go into service sometime after Spring Festival, according to the administration.

The measure is intended as a convenience for locals, as more and more Beijingers have been traveling abroad in recent years.

The new posts will handle first time passport application only. After submitting the papers, applicants do not need to return to collect their passports, as they will be delivered by post to the applicant's designated address.

For those who want to apply for emergency services, a ten-day turn around time is available.

Bids Invited for Subway Station Designs

By Hou Mingxin

The Xicheng District Urban Planning Bureau issued a notice Saturday inviting public bid for the design of eight stations of the No. 4 subway line, which will begin construction this year. The public bidding program will start this month.

The 26 kilometer subway line will run from Majiapu in southern Beijing's Fengtai District, passing through Fengtai, Xuanwu, Xicheng and Haidian districts, ending at the Summer Palace in northern Beijing.

When complete, the line will have 22 stations, including eight in Xicheng District. From south to north, these will be Xuanwumen, Xidan, Lingjinghutong, Xisi, Ping'anli, Xijiekouxi, Xizhimen and Beijing Zoo.

In order to take full advantage of the commercial profit of the infrastructure projects, bidders are required to consider the integration of the proposed stations with the existing structures on the ground.

Beijing to Sell Municipal Bonds

By Hou Mingxin

In order to raise money to build highways, bridges, subways, light-rail, and other infrastructure projects, the Beijing government is planning to sell municipal bonds, according to a report published in Beijing Youth Daily on Sunday.

Research project findings conducted by Beihang University on the security of the proposed bonds indicate they should be limited to within 11 billion yuan.

Detailed research and study has been carried out on the state of local public finance, with materials including data related to Beijing's municipal financial revenue and disbursement from 1971 to 2000.

Han Liyan, a professor at Beihang University, told media, "In order to control and supervise the credit risk levels of the municipal bonds, a strict censorship and a limited size of the municipal bonds are necessary. Meanwhile, the government should also strengthen finance supervising. Issuers should disclose details of their financial condition through official statements."



Beijing Auction Trading publicly auctioned 19 properties belonging to Liu Xiaoping to recoup losses caused by evasion of tax by Liu's companies. Eighteen apartments were sold for 6.61 million yuan.

(Xinhua Photo)

Beijing Pajero Sport Rolls Out

The Pajero Sport produced by Beijing Jeep Corporation rolled off the production line in Beijing on Wednesday. It's a joint project by Beijing Jeep and DaimlerChrysler, and the first new product to be released since the two companies extended their contract for a further 30 years.

Photo by He Dengfeng



Foreign Banks Launch Internet Services in China

By Hou Mingxin

HSBC, the Bank of East Asia (BEA) and Hang Seng Bank have just become the first group of overseas banks to launch online banking services in China's mainland.

With the approval of the People's Bank of China, the three banks can offer Internet-based services including account balance and transaction inquiries, capital transfer, inquiries about exchange rates and interest rates, opening fixed-term deposit accounts, ordering check books and upgrading individual data.

Dicky Yip, Chief Executive of China Business at HSBC, said, "The launch of Internet banking services here has opened a new chapter for HSBC's personal financial services in mainland China. We aim to build on the Group's successful Internet banking experience in many countries around the world,



and provide quality online services to customers in the China market."

"Our personal e-Banking services in the mainland will enhance our service and help maximize the acquisition of new customers. This is an important step forward in our plan to eventually become one of the most prominent foreign banks in the mainland," said Vincent Cheng, vice-chairman of Hang Seng Bank.

This new service removes time and geographical constraints on banking transactions, allowing BEA customers to access their bank accounts and other BEA banking services anytime, anywhere, BEA said.

With the development of the information industry, online banking systems which offer lower costs and better services have become popular around the world.

From 1997 to 2000, investment in Internet-based banking services increased by about 36 percent year-

on-year in the world's financial institutions.

E-banking covers 20 percent and 12 percent of Hang Seng Bank and BEA's total business.

"Because of the gap in the number of branches between us and local banks, it is difficult for us to compete with local banks in traditional trade," said Ji Yunbing, vice director of BEA's Shanghai branch. "So we hope to narrow the distance between us and our clients through the Internet."

Following China's entry into the WTO, domestic banks face fierce competition from their overseas rivals. The emergence of e-banks is a convenient way for overseas banks to overcome their disadvantages, which will help them take more of China's market, said Sun Weidong, a manager with the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China.

Pandamonium for Mobile Company Sales Force

By Ema ma

"Turmoil has broken out in the sales force of Panda, the company which offered the top bid among China's mobile phone companies for prime time advertising rights on CCTV," *Chengdu Economic Daily* has just revealed.

The report claimed that the company's sales director and the manager of the Guangdong branch had been fired following the New Year's Day holiday and that 100 middle level sales managers and 2000 sales staff are awaiting re-appointment to new jobs and offices.

Panda Mobile — "Normal personnel reshuffle"

The company has played down the move. "Personnel adjustment is unavoidable according to our new development goals for 2003," said Hua Yongqing, Assistant to the General Manager of Panda Mobile, "this is just a normal business operation."

"We will set up a new company concentrating on marketing of Panda mobiles to replace the original sales department and appoint our vice president as the leader of the new company. This is the reason for the personnel changes," Hua continued.

Despite information from reliable sources that many other branches' heads had handed in their resignations, Hua denied there would be further departures of top level executives. "Only one head has submitted his resignation until now," he said.

Big year

A number of local players have swarmed into the promising mobile phone market in recent years, joining the big names like Nokia, Ericsson and Motorola. Local brands' market share has soared from 5 percent in 2000 to 36 percent in 2002.

However, due to the lack of their own technology, many of these new-

comers are regarded merely as a front for the international giants who provide much of their products, such as Capital and Nokia, Eastcom and Motorola. Panda is not an exception. Thus far, it has been seen mainly as a workshop for Ericsson.

Panda's "own brand" phones were really clones of Ericsson's outdated models and these accounted for no more than one sixth of Panda's total production volumes in 2001. The company only made a profit through processing Ericsson's mobiles.

New partnership

A bold new dawn beckoned for Panda when its twelve-year cooperation with Ericsson was ended last year after the Scandinavian multinational unveiled its global streamlining plan. Panda has struck up a new partnership with Microcell, one of Europe's major mobile platform designers which was once also an research and development partner with

Ericsson and Nokia. Microcell has bought Ericsson's 65 percent stake in Panda and will cooperate with Panda in design, production and overseas sales.

According to the agreement, Microcell will continuously update the design of the phones to keep in touch with the latest fashions. The company has also guaranteed that for every phone sold in the local market, it will sell two overseas.

Panda has also joined forces with Tianchuang, the biggest mobile agent in Jiangsu Province to expand its sales network all over the country.

Following up on its efforts to integrate its design, production and marketing facilities in 2002, Panda aims to spend 200 million yuan on advertising this year. It's all part of an ambitious plan to get a head start in 2003, which many believe will be a decisive year for the 36 domestic mobile phone companies.

ConocoPhillips Starts Oil Production in Bohai

By Zhao Hongyi

Phillips China Inc., a subsidiary of the US integrated petroleum giant ConocoPhillips, announced earlier this week the beginning of production at its plant in the Peng Lai 19-3 field in China's Bohai Bay, three years after the well was discovered.

ConocoPhillips and China National Offshore Oil Corporation Ltd. (CNOOC) signed a petroleum contract in December 1994 granting ConocoPhillips the right to explore Block 11/05, a 2.3 million-acre area located in Bohai Bay.

Phillips China drilled the well in May 1999. CNOOC participated in the development with a 51 percent working interest. Daily gross production of the wells is put at 35,000 to 40,000 barrels of oil per day, of which 17,500 to 20,000 barrels will be taken by ConocoPhillips.

Healthy Profits for China Construction Bank

The China Construction Bank announced 2002 profits of 34.43 billion yuan (about US\$4.16 billion) on Wednesday, an increase of 4.8 billion yuan, or 16.2 percent, over the previous year.

Of the total profits, 30.1 billion yuan was used to write off bad debts, leaving gross profits totaling 4.33 billion yuan.

A spokesman for the bank said the bank's business efficiency had greatly improved, as indicated by an assets-to-income ratio of 1.16 percent and a return rate of 27.68 percent, increases of 0.04 and 2.87 percent respectively, over the previous year.

In 2002, he noted, the bank's loans increased by 16.8 percent, with the percentage of non-performing loans dropping 2.94 percent.

The bank's investment in bonds and capital trading generated returns of 19.8 billion yuan, an increase of 9 percent, and its intermediate businesses produced 4.8 billion yuan, up 36 percent from the previous year.

(Xinhua)

Kodak to Expand Digital Photo Printing Service

Kodak, the US-based film giant, announced Tuesday in Shanghai it would jointly promote a service with Nokia to print photos taken by digital cameras in mobile phones.

The company launched the service because mobile phones with digital cameras were becoming popular among Chinese, said Chen Yaorong, general manager of the Consumer Imaging Department under Kodak (China) Co. Ltd.

The company expected sales of the new products, part mobile phone and part camera, would top 12 million units this year, accounting for 20 percent of the total sales of mobile phones in China.

"Printing photos taken by mobile phones will be an increasing business for our photo finishing services," Chen said.

The new service not only provides prints on paper, but also on cards and cups as fun gifts.

In another major step to expand its digital business, Kodak China has just launched its first online service for photo printing here.

Customers can send digital photos to the Kodak service through the Internet and have them printed instead of going there in person.

The service will be carried out in other big cities like Beijing, Guangzhou and Hangzhou by the end of this year.

(Xinhua)

Degussa to Be Responsible Citizen

By A Yi

Degussa AG, the Dusseldorf-based specialty chemistry researcher and producer, has won a license for investment business in China. The company said it was committed to assisting China's progress towards becoming a chemical industrial giant in Asia as well as providing environment friendly chemical products for the upcoming 2008 Olympic Games.

China has been cautious in granting investment business licenses to multinationals, with stringent requirements in terms of business extent, product quality and sustainability of their engagement in the local market. "The number of licenses granted up till now is no more than 200," according to Eric Baden, who will be president of Degussa (China) Holding.

Degussa has been producing specialty chemical products such as carbon blacks, amino acids and water treatment chemicals in China since 1988. It has eleven branches in Nanning, Guangzhou, Shanghai, Qingdao and Beijing, and employs over 800 workers. Annual sales in China are 210 million euros.

Degussa (China) Holding will be the group's investment business operation in China, performing as a platform providing support to its local business expansion. In particular, the new company will help determine the direction of the group's local research and development. It will also increase contact with China's universities, and foster the education and training of Chinese junior executives.

Cold Dawn for CITIC Securities

By Shan Jinliang

When Wang Dongming, chairman of CITIC Securities, toasted the company's official listing on Shanghai Stock Market Monday, he probably didn't expect the share price of CITIC to fall so hard on the first day.

Wang's company was China's first listed securities operation to be approved by the China Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC) last September, and it was also the first stock to be listed in the new year.

The CITIC shares started trading at a price of 5.53 yuan and closed at 5.01 yuan, which was only 11.33 percent higher than the issue price. The cold market response will cast a shadow on the stock market early this year, analysts say.

Mou Tao from CITIC's Research and Consulting Department said the market response was worse than he

had expected, even though he had anticipated the shares would not perform well to begin with.

Guotai Jun'an Securities Institute's Yang Qingli said it was not strange for a new share to lose value given the general drop in the country's stock market throughout 2002 and the early days of 2003. Yang attributed the bad performance of CITIC Securities to the close connection between securities companies and the stock market.

Others think the declining profits of the company led to its uncertain start on the stock market. According to *New Securities*, CITIC listed itself as either the top or the No. 2 among China's securities companies in profits in 2000 and 2001, but its 2002 profits fell by around 30 percent, as predicted by Sohu's financial report earlier last year.

In light of the plummeting stock

market in China, the fact that CITIC Securities' profits reached around 80 million yuan by the end of November last year was still fairly respectable. But the operating capital flow was unpredictable for the company in 2002, and the company lost money in business operation, investment and finance.

The falling trend of CITIC Securities will bring a negative impact to the whole stock market, said Qin Hong, an analyst from Tianding Securities. He added that since the CITIC Securities stock issue, with a total number of 2.48 billion shares, was such a large offering, it could drag down some other big stocks.

"It was a still a good beginning for securities companies," said Yang, "and other offerings will follow from four or five securities companies like Guotai Jun'an Securities and Hitone Securities who are ready to launch



Wang Dongming, chairman of CITIC Securities

Photos by Photocome

IPOs this year."

Other analysts say the cold market response to CITIC Securities may make the listing of other securities companies more difficult. Knowing his rivals will have a harder time launching IPOs this year should provide Wang some comfort.



Bush Unveils \$674 Billion Stimulus Plan

CHICAGO, Jan. 7 (Reuters) - US President Bush on Tuesday unveiled a \$674 billion plan to boost the American economy by scrapping taxes investors pay on dividends and speeding income tax reductions.

Bush's proposal, unveiled in a speech at the Economic Club of Chicago, set off a major debate in Washington over how best to deal with a US economy struggling with a six percent unemployment rate and Americans wary of investing in a three-year bear market.

The White House said the plan will give 92 million taxpayers an average tax cut of \$1,083 this year. Up to 35 million people who get income from dividends could benefit, thereby increasing consumer spending and investment.

The dividend tax elimination will cost \$364 billion over 10 years.

About \$3.6 billion would be provided to states to help create so-called personal re-employment accounts for people having a hard time finding work.

In addition to eliminating all taxes on dividends paid by shareholders, Bush proposed:

- Accelerating reductions in income tax rates for all income brackets, now scheduled for 2004 and 2006, to this year. That would lower the 27 percent bracket to 25 percent, the 30 percent

- bracket to 28 percent, the 35 percent bracket to 33 percent and the top 38.6 percent bracket to 35 percent.

- Increasing to \$75,000 from \$25,000 the amount small businesses can write off for investments in new equipment.

- Expanding the 10 percent tax bracket to the first \$7,000 in income from \$6,000.

- Fully implementing tax breaks for married couples.

- Immediately expanding the child tax credit to \$1,000 from the current \$600.

(Adam Entous)

Analysts' Take:

Chen Baoshen, senior researcher, Institute of American Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

Why is President Bush promoting this kind of economic stimulus package?

The initiative is the third economic step Bush has taken in his presidency, after his first tax reduction plan was carried out in 2001 and he named a new treasury secretary and economic advisor last month.

Analysts believe Bush's latest package is aimed at consolidating his political position for the upcoming 2004 US presidential election. Bush is probably concerned about winning a second

term because his father, despite having astronomical popularity ratings after the Gulf War in 1992, lost the election for his second term that same year. The major reason was the domestic economic depression.

What are the critical problems facing the US economy?

The real problems in the US economy are, first, over-investment in production facilities and infrastructure during the prosperity of the 1990s, particularly in the telecommunications industry. This increased companies' debt burdens, forcing them to reduce future investment and driving small companies into bankruptcy.

Secondly, the US economy's future is plagued by many uncertainties, such as corporate scandals, the possible war against Iraq, and the unclear picture for solving the issue of North Korea's nuclear capability.

What are possible factors hampering the efficacy of the new initiative?

The Bush administration still has to wait for approval from the Congress and Senate before implementing the plan, neither of which will come in before the second half of this year.

Most of the tax reduction plans will clearly benefit the rich, who are not expected to greatly increase spending either way. Therefore, the initiative's actual ability to stimulate economic

growth is highly dubious.

Many US states have announced they lack the funds to match federal initiative and fully implement the initiative. Though the Bush administration has agreed to increase funding to states, the abilities of individual states to implement the plan and their results are very much in question.

Li Gang, director of US Studies, Institute of World Development, Development Research Center, State Council

Are there any other means to stimulate economic growth in the US?

In a free market economy, interest rates and taxation are the two major keys in macro-economic management.

Democrats argue that tax cuts should focus more on poor and vulnerable people in order to increase their consumption capabilities. The federal government should provide more business loans to small and medium enterprises to stimulate a larger part of the US economy.

The key is that a government should increase the whole nation's confidence in domestic economic growth. Many economists have listed 'economic confidence' as the third role a government can play in managing its economy, aside from controlling interest rates and tax rates. China has been doing quite well in this regard so far. (Zhao Hongyi)

Bush, Cheney To See

Tax-cut Windfall

WASHINGTON, Jan. 7 (Reuters)- US President George W. Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney each stand to reap thousands of dollars in savings from Bush's proposal announced Tuesday to eliminate taxes on stock dividends.

Based on income reported in his tax returns for 2001, Bush would have saved \$16,511 on dividend payments of \$43,805 if his new proposal had been in effect for that year. Cheney, who had dividends of \$278,103 in 2001, would have saved \$104,823.

Bush deflected a question on Monday about how he would personally benefit from the dividend-tax cut. "My money is in a blind trust ... so I don't know if I've got any dividends," he told reporters.

Bush and Cheney also benefited handsomely from the \$1.35 trillion tax cut passed by Congress in 2001. Cheney saved an estimated \$43,000 on a tax bill of \$1.72 million that year, and Bush saved an estimated \$7,205.

British Insurer Refuses to Cover al-Qaeda Attacks

LONDON, Jan. 3 (Independent) - The growing threat from terrorism has led Britain's biggest home insurer to specifically exclude coverage for chemical, biological and "dirty" nuclear attacks.

Norwich Union warned its clients that their home and content policies would not entitle them to compensation for damage caused by such attacks. Norwich Union insures one in five of all homes in Britain.

Other insurance companies are expected to follow suit. (Kim Sengupta)

Konica, Minolta Unveil Merger Plan

TOKYO, Jan. 7 (Reuters) - Japan's Konica and Minolta, two film photography giants struggling for a foothold in the digital era, unveiled a merger plan Tuesday that they hope will put them in the big league of camera and office machine makers with Canon and Ricoh.

The merger, due in August and likely to create a Konica-controlled entity with a current market value of 460 billion yen (\$3.86 billion), will bring a 10 percent cut over the next three years in their combined 38,500 work force.

Konica, the world's third-largest photo filmmaker, and Minolta, a leading maker of single-lens reflex cameras hobbled by heavy debts, are increasingly focusing on office machines, where they earn more than half their combined revenues.

(Edmund Klamann)

GE Raises Workers' Health Co-Pays

WASHINGTON, Jan. 1 (Washington Post) - General Electric Co. increased the share of medical costs paid by its workers from January 1 - setting the stage for the first strike against the industrial giant in three decades.

GE plans to increase the amount that workers pay for doctors visits and other health care expenses from about \$500 to \$700 a year, said company spokesman Gary Sheffer. Overall costs to workers will go up about 20 percent above the current \$1,000 a year.

The company said that its health care costs have increased 45 percent, from \$965 million in 1999 to \$1.4 billion in 2002.

Unions representing approximately 17,500 of GE's 121,000 workers already have authorized a strike against the company, saying they will set the date for the strike once the increases take effect.

(Martha McNeil Hamilton)

America West to Sell Food on Flights

PHOENIX, USA, Jan. 3 (AP) - America West, US' eighth-largest carrier will test a "Buy on Board" program starting Monday that allows passengers to buy meals costing from \$3 to \$10. At least two other airlines - Continental and Northwest - are considering similar moves.

"The program is designed to offset the cost of providing food, not to make a profit," Monahan said. "We're trying to meet customer needs without raising ticket prices."

Other airlines, including Southwest, United, Delta and American, said Thursday they have no immediate plans to begin selling food.

But some said the effort could improve airplane food. (Beth DeFalco)



America West Airlines began charging for in-flight meals on January 6, in trials to be held on a dozen flights a day for three weeks.

AP Photo

Over 40 automakers around the world, including big names like GM, Ford, Nissan, are showing off their latest car designs, products, and glitzy dream cars at the Detroit's Cobo Center, where the 2003 North America International Auto Show is underway this week. The show has become an annual gathering for the world's auto industry.

While nearly all major carmakers are predicting in Detroit that US car sales will increase in 2003, even most analysts foresee a decline in light vehicle sales in 2002.

Oldsmobile unveiled its futuristic Aerotech concept vehicle at the show on January 6.

Xinhua Photo



Italy Wants Fiat to Stay

MILAN, Italy, Jan. 4 (Reuters) - Italian financier Roberto Colaninno confirmed he was studying a "friendly" plan to intervene that foresees "direct involvement" in the running of Fiat.

Fiat said it was sticking with its existing restructuring and debt-slashing plan. Colaninno is thought to have the political backing for an "Italian solution" to Fiat's problems, avoiding the sale of loss-making Fiat Auto to partner General Motors Corp.

Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi has repeatedly said he wants Italy's biggest private sector employer to stay Italian.

(Heather Prentice)

80 percent in 2004. Fiat has an option to sell the entire unit to GM next year.

Italian entrepreneur Roberto Colaninno has said he is preparing a rescue plan for Fiat, and news reports have said a key element of his plan is to release GM from its obligation to buy the rest of Fiat Auto.

Rick Wagoner, president and CEO of the world's largest automaker, said his company plans to continue with the activities that it has with Fiat "for the long term."

But he also said he prefers not to get involved in any prospective deals involving suitors for Fiat, and described the company's situation as "fast moving."

(John Porretto)

Analysts' Take:

Luo Hongbo, director & senior researcher, Italian Research and Study Center, Institute of European Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

What are the factors behind the crisis facing Fiat?

The sliding of the world economy and Italy's is the major factor behind.

This is critical to Italy's economy, which is heavily dependent on the country's external ties.

Fiat's auto sales have been falling in countries in which it produces cars, including Turkey, Brazil and Tunisia. In the 1990s, Fiat Auto's market share in the EU dropped 15 percent to less than 10 percent. Its share of the Italian market has fallen to 22.77 percent in 2002 from the previous year's 25.43 percent.

The second factor is Fiat Group's business diversification and globalization efforts in the 1990s.

The car-based private (family controlled) group entered the IT business solutions sector and consolidated its stance in businesses such as insurance and banking services, publishing and communications, the metallurgical industry, as well as its traditional fields like auto components, aircraft and aerospace, agricultural and construction equipment.

Fiat Auto also increased its production bases around the world, including regions and countries such as Eastern Europe, Brazil, North Africa, Middle East, and China.

This rapid business diversification and globalization campaign left Fiat Auto and Fiat Group strapped for cash, which is the major factor behind the company's current crisis.

How can Fiat get out of its troubles?

Two possibilities lie ahead.

First, the Italian government will do its utmost to provide help. Last year, the government extended the group a number of tax exemptions, greatly reducing the financial pressure on the company.

The Italian government has been active in managing ways out for the group. This week, Fiat's management group and workers' union reached an agreement, making compromises on layoffs and wage cuts. Under this new agreement, Fiat Auto's Turin plant reopened.

The second possibility is that if the group can't get out of trouble on its own, it may have to sell some shares to foreign investors, including some from the US. But the Italians have set a requirement that domestic interests always hold a 51 percent majority stake and buy back any shares sold, sooner or later. (Ayi)

In the Skin of a Lion

By Sun Ming

Two Beijing auction house this week turned down a request by a local company to put the pelt of an African lion up for auction. The refusal follows a similar response from a Shanghai auction house.

All three auction houses reportedly declined to handle lion skin, said to be worth around \$20,000, for fear of falling foul of China's wildlife protection laws.

The deputy manager of Beijing Taxidermy and Trophy Company, which imported the pelt from South Africa last month, said they had not expected such a strong emphasis on animal protection in China.

"We have both an export and an import permit for the specimen," said deputy manager Wu Tao. "We are the only company in China permitted to import wild animal specimens."

Wu showed the managing license, which was issued by the Beijing Forestry Bureau last month, to *Beijing Today* Tuesday.

Besides the lion skin, the company has also imported the stuffed heads of zebra, warthogs and four species of antelope, worth between 6,000 and 22,000 yuan, which it hopes to sell as home decorations.

"The auction houses have never handled animal trophies before and consider it inappropriate



"Do not feed the animals" signs not required. Beijing Taxidermy and Trophy employee Wen Di with the unwanted lion pelt.

Photo by Sun Ming

to do so," said Wu who declined to name the companies that had been approached.

An auctioneer from Beijing Auction House, which has not yet been approached by the company, said they would also be cautious about accepting such items. "We would ask for a certificate of permission from the Beijing Forestry Bureau first, if we intended to accept the auction," auctioneer Wang Xu told *Beijing Today*.

The Lufthansa Center, known for selling high price luxury goods, also said no to the company last week. "They even refused

to show our specimens in their lobby," Wu said.

"Actually, we bought all of the specimens legally, and most come from animals that died of natural causes. Also, if a ranch with a capacity for 10,000 gemsboks has 15,000 gemsboks, the surplus are allowed to be culled under South African law," he said.

According to the Forestry Bureau, the Beijing Taxidermy and Trophy Company have not violated the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

"They have no specimens be-

longing to Appendix I, and they have export permits for those specimens of wild animals covered by Appendix II," said Zhang Yueying, director of the Wild Animal Office of the Beijing Forestry Bureau.

Animals and plants listed in Appendix I are the most endangered in the world, and all trade in them is forbidden under international law. Appendix II lists species that are not necessarily now threatened with extinction but may become so unless trade is closely controlled. International trade in specimens of Appendix II species may be authorized by the granting an export permit or re-export certificate.

However, Zhang Li, an associate professor at Beijing Normal University, says the fact that the company has not violated the convention does not mean that such trade is acceptable.

"I absolutely object to this kind of business," Zhang told *Beijing Today*. He maintains that the selling of specimens of wild animals will definitely threaten their existence, if not now, then in the future.

"Putting these things on the market will definitely spur demand. Some illegal traders, if not in China, then in other countries, will take advantage of the situation to hunt more and more wild animals for profit."

Help is at Hand for Off Color Flowers

By Chen Ying

Amateur horticulturalists now have somewhere they can consult an expert about the best time to plant a gerbera, or take their pet nasturtium when it loses its luster.

A free weekend flower clinic opened Sunday at Zhongshu Dasenlin Flower Market, on the north west Third Ring Road. Flower specialists from Beijing Agricultural College will be on hand to offer advice on everything from how to cure curly leaf and black spot, to why clematis wilt is a bad thing and what can be done to prevent it. Growing tropical plants and

flowers has become an increasingly popular hobby in Beijing in recent years, with many more varieties becoming available from the south. Few people, however, know how best to cultivate these exotic plants.

"People used to call the market office to get advice on techniques for growing flowers. Many even bring their ailing plants to the market seeking help," said Ge Yang, the market office spokeswoman.

Beijing Agricultural College has set up the clinic in cooperation with the market. It is staffed by professors and graduate students from the college.



Professor Chen Zhihuan demonstrates the right way to add fertilizer.

Photo by Wang Zhenlong

Interior Decoration Causes a Stink

By Su Wei

Settling into a newly furnished apartment would be good news for most people. But for Qin Jing and her family, the move into their new home cost the entire family their good health.

More than one year after lodging the case against Beijing Huaqingda Decoration, the People's Court of Xuanwu District ordered the company pay the family nearly 120,000 yuan in compensation. The payout covers physical harm, medical expenses, loss of work time and redecoration expenses caused by the pollution from products used in the interior decoration.

In April 2000, Qin signed a contract with Huaqingda to furnish her new apartment. "Two months later, they finished the job. The quality of the work seemed good, but a strong smell remained and our eyes still stung, even after we moved in, in November," says Qin.

Qin says her husband caught a cold and suffered from a continual fever, lasting for over one month in early 2001. "He lost more than 15 kilograms within one month." Her two daughters, both aged 14, frequently

complained of dizziness. "I always felt uncomfortable. I developed a sore throat, and my memory became so bad that I could not remember what my employees had told me just a few minutes before," she said.

Qin says doctors at Tiantan Hospital suspected her family was suffering from formaldehyde poisoning, from the furnishing materials. "We had to move out of the apartment in April 2001," she said. Till now, the family still live in rented apartment which costs them 1,800 yuan per month.

In June 2001, Qin asked the Interior Decoration Association to test the amount of formaldehyde in the apartment. The result showed there was 0.71 milligrams of formaldehyde per cubic meter, nine times the permitted level.

Qin told *Beijing Today* she was satisfied with the court's decision, but says "the suffering she and her family endured cannot be compensated or calculated in cash." After the court handed down its decision, a spokesperson for Huaqingda said the company was reserving its right to appeal, but declined to say on what grounds.

Students Get Major Changes

By Lily Li

What would you do if you had to spend four years studying a major in which you had no interest?

Unlike students in western universities who can usually switch majors, many Chinese students must quit university first and take another National College Entrance Examination.

Liu Xiao (a pseudonym), once a top Tsinghua undergraduate, left this prestigious university last summer to prepare to sit again for the entrance examination this June.

"I wanted to study in the computer department when I choose Tsinghua University, but was moved to the chemistry department because my marks weren't good enough. I had no interests in my major at all, and I'd rather start all over again than study what I don't want," says Liu.

Li Yitang is another student who is re-sitting the exam. Li spent two years in Tsinghua's architecture department, after which he realized he had no love for the subject and decided

to leave school. In 1999, he returned to his home in Hunan Province where he re-sat the college entrance exam in July 2000, and was admitted to Tsinghua's school of chemistry.

"Although I am two years older than my fellow students, I don't think it matters because I'm working hard to realize my dreams. I have no regrets about this decision," Li told *Beijing Today*.

Statistic from re-examination classes in Beijing middle schools show the number of students re-sitting exams this year has reached 5,000, six percent of whom have previously been accepted by universities, like Liu Xiao and Li Yitang.

However, Deng Liman, deputy director general of Tsinghua University's educational administration department, says students need not leave university just because they want to change majors, as Tsinghua started to allow the practice last year. Provided they pass the relevant examinations and get approval from the department, they can enroll in a different major.



Migrant Workers Put on a Pedestal

By Su Wei

An exhibition at Red Gate Gallery gives center stage to migrant workers, or at least, their likenesses. The eight sculptures represent migrant workers in the occupations they

most commonly work in, such as construction, security, delivery. There are an estimated three million migrant workers currently living in Beijing. The works by Liang Shuo, a 23-year-old graduate of the Central Acad-

emy of Fine Arts, are on show till February 16.

Where: Red Gate Gallery, Dongbianmen Watchtower

Photo by Li Shuzhuan

For Now, the Bell Tolls

By Sun Ming

The nearly 600-year-old Yongle Bell at the Great Bell Temple has fallen silent again, after tolling 108 times on New Year's eve.

As a measure to protect the bell, which was cast during the Ming dynasty and named after a Ming Emperor Yongle, it is only rung once a year. Another equally ancient bell in the Temple of Heaven Park, however, is still rung by tourists every day.

Like the Yongle Bell, the Taihe Bell was also made during the reign of Ming Emperor Yongle, and is made of copper. Visitors to the Temple of Heaven are charged one yuan for the privilege of striking the bell, which is believed to bring good luck.

"The bell will be damaged sooner or later," Gao Kaijun, an expert from the Ancient Bell Museum of the Great Bell Temple, told *Beijing Today*.

According to Gao, ringing the Yongle Bell once a year poses no

risk. Also, as a tradition, the 108 peals from the bell to mark the New Year can spread luck and happiness for following year. A loudhailer is usually held to the Yongle Bell when it is beaten, "So people don't need to beat it too hard," he said.

However Li Tiehu, the researcher of the Capital Museum says, "It's difficult to say the Taihe Bell will be harmed by being rung, it was built just for beating. Like a piano or bicycle, the bell should also be used sometimes. But maybe not so often."

Staff at the Temple of Heaven Park maintain that the Taihe Bell, which has been beaten for hundreds of years, is still in good condition. Around 30 tourists who want to pray for good luck ring the bell every day.

"We often tell tourists not to beat the bell too hard," Wu Caijun, head of the Temple of Heaven Park Antique Office, told *Beijing Today*.



"Donkey Zone"

On New Year's Day, a donkey cart laden with watermelons occupied a parking space near Guangming Bridge, on the Second Ring Road.

The watermelon vendor, a young man who declined to give his name, told *Beijing Today*, "I did not simply stop in any old place. This is a parking lane, and I am not disrupting traffic!"

Photo by Bai Jikai

By Chen Ying

Though the Ministry of Civil Affairs is still awaiting the State Council's modifications of its new version of the national Marriage Registration Management Ordinance, some regional governments have begun to leak information about probable changes in the document.

A spokesman for the Shanghai Municipal Government told the *Shanghai Morning Post* on January 1 that following the launch of the new regulation, new couples will be able to decide whether or not to go through prenuptial physical checkups. In the past, thorough medical exams were a required part of the process of registering for marriage.

This anticipated change has received nationwide media attention and is seen as an unprecedented move by the government in withdrawing direct control in favor of the promotion of individual rights.

Prenuptial physical checks first started in China in 1995 with the intention of promoting health among the country's entire population. Some regional governments had taken similar steps earlier — for example, the Beijing Municipal Government has required pre-marriage physicals since 1985.

These examinations normally consist of three parts: a medical history inquiry and basic physical check, detailed checks like X-rays or blood tests and other special inspections thought necessary, such as HIV testing. The prices of the whole process are closely regulated, so that couples do not have to spend more than 200 yuan to complete their prenuptial checkups in Beijing.

According to the Ministry of Health, of the nearly 8.8 million people that received prenuptial checkups in 2001, 140,000 were found to have health conditions that could affect their marriages. Among them, more than 20,000 had venereal diseases, including 84 cases of HIV/AIDS, 15,000 had mental disorders or diseases and 6,500 were found to have genetic diseases.

The abolition of required checkups is considered by many as representative of consideration of new couples and respect of their rights to privacy. However, how to balance human rights with the need to monitor the health of the national population remains a thorny issue. The latest Marriage Registration Management Ordinance is hoped to help resolve some of the conflicts surrounding this issue.

Getting Hitched to Get Easier

Government expected to give couples choice regarding prenuptial medical checks

One Official's View

About 80,000 new couples in the capital receive prenuptial checkup every year, according to the Beijing Municipal Health Bureau. Prospective couples can undergo the checks in 28 hospitals endorsed by the bureau.

The latest version of the Beijing Prenuptial Healthcare Criterion released by the Municipal Health Bureau on January 1 includes some important new changes, such as new couples being allowed to choose which tests can be run as detailed exams or special checks as part of the prenuptial physical process.

Parties must also sign the documents for each part of their checkups to show they understand the function of each exam. At the end of every form listing the results of checks there are spaces for each marriage partner to sign, showing they have read and understand their results and those of their partners. According to the bureau, these measures provide for the protection of couples' privacy while still allowing doctors to fulfill their duties of informing the couples about their health status.

Beijing Today interviewed Ren Zhengmei, a spokeswoman for the Beijing Municipal Health Bureau, about prenuptial checkups and changes to related policy.

Beijing Today: What do you think about the news that the Ministry of Health will no longer make prenuptial checkups required in reg-

istering for marriage?

Ren: *Though I don't know anything about the changes made to the latest Marriage Registration Management Ordinance, I think it should not contradict other national laws. The twelfth item of the Women and Infants' Healthcare Law, which was issued in 1995, states that partners should bring along proof they have undergone prenuptial checkups when they register at marriage offices. So I think that the contents of prenuptial checks should be made optional instead of simply abandoning the checks altogether.*

Beijing Today: What has public reaction been to prenuptial checkups?

Ren: *Our bureau surveyed 4,900 citizens on this subject last August. Of those interviewed, 4,775 said that prenuptial checkups are necessary.*

Beijing Today: But why are there still many people who dislike the checkup?

Ren: *Prenuptial checkups are really useful as a way to avoid birth defects as well as to promote happiness and stability among families. The reason that people have complained about the exams is that they are not done consistently. In some areas, especially in the countryside, only around 40 percent of couples or less get such checks. Also, because of the actions of some irresponsible doctors, many people have wrongly concluded the checks are a total waste of time and money.*

Nationwide Response

A report run in the *Wuhan Morning Post* on January 2 depicted a local official and expert worried about the effects of the negation of the prenuptial checks. Both a spokesman of the local Health Bureau and Tu Yiqiao, the president of the Wuhan Municipal Women and Children's Hospital, expressed views that most people were unaware just how important these exams are.

They are worried that the number of couples who undergo prenuptial checkups will fall dramatically if the government no longer makes such checks mandatory. The report cited figures that eight percent of the 22,000 people that underwent checks in Wuhan last year were discovered to have problems with their reproductive systems. Two percent of the checked couples decided to delay their marriages after receiving the results of their physicals.

Another report run in *Nanfang Daily* the same day said a survey conducted in Guangzhou shows that equal numbers of people support and oppose mandatory prenuptial checks. That report also said the Guangzhou government has stated that it will continue to uphold the old regulation until the new one is released.

The government of Changsha, Hunan Province, is taking a similar stance according to a *Xiaoxiang Morning Post* report published January 2. A spokesman from the Changsha Bureau of Civil Affairs said there is a trend towards making prenuptial checkups optional, and added the only way to make the upcoming Marriage Registration Management Ordinance more consistent with the core principle of the Marriage Law is to emphasize people's freedom of choice.

Public Comments

Yang Gengshen, commentator, China Youth Daily

The question now is will people decide to still get prenuptial checkups if the government abolishes their legal necessity. I've heard that already nearly 50 percent of new couples don't receive the checkups every year.

There are three main reasons to get prenuptial checkups — for the health of couples and their offspring; to improve national population quality; and as a platform for doctors to tell couples how to improve their chances of having children and how to use contraception and avoid pregnancy. With this in mind, we should carefully consider the actual use of these checkups before going ahead and abandoning them or making them optional.

Wang Lei, accountant, just married

I think that prenuptial checkups should be necessary considering current conditions in China. Some foreigners might find that strange, but there are many differences between China and the West. People pay more attention to their health as part of daily life in Western countries. Also, they receive more comprehensive sex education. Things are changing now in China, but some changes need time to really take root in people's minds.

Xiao Hui, Internet surfer

Having the right not to undergo a prenuptial checkup does not mean people will necessarily do so. It's just like my having the right to smoke — I decide whether I will smoke or not. What I need is to have and understand my rights — how I use them is another issue.

Ge Yujie (Chinese name), German

I would not want to have to get a physical check before getting married. I've never heard of such a thing in Europe. It's unnecessary. It's a strange way of checking whether a partner is worthy of marrying or not. If I wanted to marry someone, the only thing I would be concerned about would be the love between us. I can understand why there might be this kind of regulation, but I wouldn't want to get such a check myself.

By Lily Li

History was in the air for more than one reason when a huge tomb, believed to hold the remains of a Han Dynasty emperor, was pried open by archeologists in Siyang County, Jiangsu Province, on January 6.

The dig has drawn extensive attention not only because of its academic value, but also because of the unconventional steps taken by the Nanjing Museum, the organization responsible for the excavation, in controlling media coverage of the event. In a bold move, the museum decided to hold an auction to sell exclusive reporting rights to the story.

"We're trying a 'reporting by fee' policy and asking media organizations to pay to cover this news, so the press should adjust its regular mindset that covering such a valuable discovery should come free of charge," said Xu Huping, curator of the Nanjing Museum.

Jiangsu Television emerged late last December with exclusive coverage rights for a price of 100,000 yuan, while the *Nanjing Morning Post* paid 10,000 yuan on January 2 to be the sole newspaper allowed to report on the dig.

The sales have proven controversial, in part because the Nanjing Museum never actually held a formal auction — the two deals were done through private negotiations. Museum authorities have admitted that the sales were not conducted through an open, competitive process.

Xu said the proceeds from the rights sales would go only toward the protection or excavation of relics or other similar activities.

After the deals were closed, the museum also invited China's national Xinhua News Agency to report the story. "Papers and other media groups that did not win rights can still report the story through Xinhua news releases," said museum director Mr. Li, who would only give his surname.

However, the museum's rigor in enforcing its coverage limits has been called into question, as unauthorized reporters have been turning up around the tomb, leading to the publishing of stories in other newspapers.

The press has largely come out against the museum's move, not only because of the secretive negotiations, but also on the basic grounds that they have the rights to cover the story as they like.

Did the Nanjing Museum have the right to sell this story? Was it proper for them to limit media coverage of this event? Should covering archeological events or other similar activities naturally come with a price tag like sports events? Opinions follow:

Qin Jidong, chief editor of Nanjing Morning Post

We have indeed bought the reporting rights, but in general we oppose such behavior.

Gathering news is not only the job of reporters, but also their duty. Providing readers with information after digging into a story is what the public's rights to be informed is all about. But now things have changed,

Dishing Out for the Dirt

Nanjing Museum hawks exclusive rights to media coverage of ancient tomb dig



Reporters pressed together to document workers breaking through into the tomb that has been sealed for over 2,000 years.

Photo provided by Modern Express

and the only way to really get the story is to pay for it — that's something the press will find hard to swallow.

At the same time, if we didn't pay, other newspapers would have covered this story, and we'd lose out in competition. So, despite our stance against this kind of deal, we ended up making an agreement with the Nanjing Museum.

As far as I see it, the rights to reporting an archeological find and those for broadcasting a sports event are totally different. There are huge price tags attached to the sports industry, supported by many organizations and a strong legal system. But, there is no legal basis for the sale of rights to report this kind of story.

Wang Jiagang, writer for China Youth Daily

According to the national constitution, the people are the masters of this country. For that reason, they need to learn about what's going on — in other words, people have the right to be informed.

However, ordinary people do not have the means to dig up information on their own, so the responsibility

for doing so falls on the media. Press reports offer important information to the public, so reporters' rights to cover stories can be seen as an extension of the public's basic rights to be informed.

So, how can the Nanjing Museum deign to limit how this story is covered? Another way to say it is why should I pay for something that by law already belongs to me?

Shi Xingdong, employee at Beijing Telecom Research Institute

I think the Nanjing Museum's deeds don't violate the law or media standards for reporting. Many archeological finds go unreported. Since the museum is in charge of this excavation, it can decide who gets coverage rights.

What's more, the Nanjing Museum hasn't kept the money from the sale of the rights for itself, but will spend it on further exploration and research. If newspapers and TV stations benefit from covering interesting stories like this because of advertising income, why shouldn't the museum also benefit?

I appreciate the museum's decision. The press nowadays enjoys a lot of privileges — it's not a bad thing to remind them there is no free lunch in this world.

Huang Yonghao, reporter for CCTV

Even though the Nanjing Museum said they will spend the money they made on protecting more cultural relics, I still don't think what they did was right.

Why excavate the tomb? Why protect cultural relics at all? I think the basic reason is that people need and want to know about their history. If you limit media coverage of this kind of story by selling exclusive rights, fewer people will end up knowing what has happened and that is irresponsible.

Also, media organizations that can't fork out enough will lose the chance to report a major story like this, leaving them to choose from less costly stories that are correspondingly less valuable.

So, in order to foster a healthy press, we should extend equal rights to all media organizations.

Yu Guoming, professor in the School of Journalism and Communication of Renmin University of China

Nowadays many media organizations pay fees for conducting interviews. If a reporter pays to get a lead or information, it clearly is just a way to get a scoop, and there is nothing wrong with that in the news market. At the same time, if somebody demands money for an interview or information, of course a reporter or media organization can refuse.

If everything in a society can be bought, the seeds of corruption will grow.

Background

CCTV paid 3 million yuan for the exclusive rights to cover the opening of the main chamber to the Beijing Laoshan Han tomb in the summer of 2000, although newspaper reporters were allowed to freely investigate the scene.

The Zhejiang Movie and Cultural Channel paid 80,000 yuan for the sole rights to broadcast the opening of the Leifeng Tower underground palace in Hangzhou in March 2001. However, due to fierce opposition from other media organizations, half an hour after the broadcast began, other reporters were allowed to enter the site in small groups.

The Fox TV network paid \$65,000 for the exclusive rights to broadcast the robotic exploration of an Egyptian pyramid in September 2002. Phoenix TV, owned by Hong Kong Satellite Television, another company in which Rupert Murdoch owns shares, won the sole Asian broadcasting rights to the event.

SOUND BITES

"It's hard to say whether the facilitation of divorce is good or bad, but one thing is certain: we are becoming less conventional and have more diversified ways of thinking."

— Zhou Keda, professor at the Guangxi Autonomous Regional Academy of Social Sciences, who attributes the increasing ease and speed of the divorce process to China's rapid economic growth and improving standards of living

"I am worried that we are giving away so much in tax cuts that we will never get back to a budget balance."

— David Wyss, chief economist at Standard & Poor's in New York, worrying that Bush's \$674 billion plan to boost the US economy might provide short-term gains this year but end up as a long-term drag over the next decade

"I was only thinking about Claudia Schiffer. I needed many rings so that she could pick one out. Besides, I wasn't sure about her ring size."

— Julio S., an unemployed Mozambican man obsessed with Claudia Schiffer, who stole 124 wedding rings to give to the German supermodel. He was sentenced to time in a psychiatric clinic by a Berlin court Tuesday

By Chen Ying

By Su Wei

After working at a dating agency for over 10 years, Yuan Li, joined a well-known Internet company specializing in matchmaking two years ago. "The profit of the website through cyber dating has tripled in that period, but the rate of increase is slowing," says Yuan. "Virtually all the major web portals provide cyber dating services."

She says the information people provide about themselves for posting on cyber dating sites is a kind of art form. "The language is more refined, the photos are more personalized, and they are updated every week."

Beijing Today interviewed seven people aged between 20 and 30 about their experiences and views of "cyber love." The consensus among them was that those who engage in "cyber love affairs" are "the most fashionable human beings."

Noting that nearly 4,500 cyber couples tied "cyber knots" on their website on Valentine's Day last year, Yuan says she expects the percentage of registered clients to "cyber marry" will double this year.

A survey by www.sina.com.cn suggests among the current over 40 million regular net users, at least three million meet their lovers online almost everyday.

Better than the real thing

In a survey conducted by www.21cn.com last year, a majority responded that the key attraction of "cyber love" was that such relationships were unobtainable "in reality."

For Wu Wei, a 28-year-old employee in a customer service department of a computer company in Zhongguancun, love in cyber space is "more pure" than its real world counterpart. "In reality, love is either influenced by utilitarianism, or confined to the traditional idea of securing love with marriage. Cyber love has nothing to do with practical issues such as housing and income. It is really a haven for the people involved, through which the real meaning of love is regained," he maintains.

Xue Ya, who is getting to know her boy friend in real life after a six-month cyber romance, says, "The attraction of cyber love is like the Chinese idiom 'beauty comes from far away.' Can you imagine how exciting and impressive it is sitting in front of a computer and experiencing the love with warm expressions from another person living in a different city or even a different country? It is completely different from sitting side by side in a park."

Another interviewee, who only gave his Internet name "Laby," says cyber love is like shopping in a supermarket. "If you cannot

lost in
cyber Love

find the right person or you do not like the way someone sounds, you can just keep clicking "delete" and never worry about whether they are hurt or not. Everything looks so easy in the Internet world."

Shen Zhe, 30, a bank clerk who has been cyber dating for two years, says like most other women who do so, she has a sense of being released from inhibition. "Since few people would use their real names on the Internet, timid people like myself are less afraid of opening their hearts to others."

Shen says the way she communicates when cyber dating is more direct and daring. "I become more confident and my colleagues consider that I am more attractive and charming in real life."

She contends that like with traditional dating, cyber lovers tend to bend the truth about their weight or height, it is just that there is more scope to do so. "For me, it does not matter too much. When we really meet in person we would forgive each other for we may have established the mutual trust through the Internet," says Shen.

Lu Qian of the Association of China's Psychology sees cyber love as a result of increased social pressures and the complicated social relationship.

She says especially for the young people, cyber love is the same as "university love." "As a psychologist, I am happy that the human nature to seek pure love has not disappeared in a society increasingly dominated by science and techniques."

Not so beautiful

The case of "Kitty" is still widely talked about online. Kitty is the Internet name of a 23-year-old girl from Fuzhou who committed suicide three years ago, unable to reconcile the differences between her initial impressions of her cyber boyfriend, his real self – after they actually met, and her desires.

Four months later, another case attracted public attention. A 16-year-old in Leshan, Sichuan, was raped by a man she had been "cyber dating" after accepting his invitation to meet him in Chengdu.

Zong Chunshan, director of Law and Psychology Consulting Center for Youth, says young people are at greater risk of psychological and physical harm resulting from cyber romance.

"At the age full of curiosity, they are more eager to pursue romance, less able to differentiate between fact and fiction," he says. "They are also more easily disappointed or to feel cheated when those they meet on the Internet turn out to be different to their expectations."

Ji Zhong (pseudonym), 21, was diagnosed with depression at Beijing No. 6 Hospital at the end of last year. In June 2001, he met a 17-year-old in an Internet chat room and fell in love with her. One month later the two "married" and established their family – a web page. "It is really too like a family," said his mother, who declined to give her name. "There are pictures of furniture, menus for their daily meals and descriptions of their life as a husband and wife."

Three months later, after the website informed Ji that his "wife" was pregnant, he spent every day reading books about childbirth. But six weeks later he was informed that his "wife" died while giving birth to the child. After that, he did nothing every day except sit in front of the computer and mourn for his 'wife' at the website cemetery.

As Yao Guizhong, the doctor treating Ji says, "Everyone except him knows the marriage was not real. It was merely a game, like raising an electronic pet."

Tang Minhua, married to her husband Li Yaxiong for over two years, is considering divorce. "I cannot tolerate that he 'married' many other women and even 'had children' on the Internet. These women all call him 'husband' and he calls them 'wife.' What about me? I am his legal wife. As a legal couple, we do not have children, but he spent several hours every night raising those non-existent children!"

Her husband's explanation that the reason he engages in these "cyber affairs" is to prevent a "real" extra-marital affair from occurring, makes her even angrier.

Chen Xinxin, a researcher at the Women's Study Institute of the All China's Women Association, points out that the two parties involved in cyber love lack a sense of security. "They get to know each other neither through the introduction of their colleagues and friends or seeing each other with their own eyes. The relationship stems entirely from a series of computer signals."

She highlights that the virtue of honesty is more easily discarded in the unreal world of the Internet. "Some may never tell the truth and some only occasionally tell the truth. No one feels shameful about that. There is no awareness of morality and no one bothers to bring any moral restraints to themselves."

Photo / Tony Stone

Quick guide to cyber love

Online matchmaking and dating is old news. Websites such as www.waei.com.cn and www.the9.com not only provide you with a perfect cyber match, they will "register" your cyber marriage, notify you of the arrival of cyber babies (that's right, babies, there is no "one cyberchild policy"), and build your perfect cyber home.

Cyber lover: A lover who is only met online. Just like a real one, without the physical contact.

Cyber marriage: If you are sure your cyber lover is the one for you, this is the next step. It has no legal standing, and cyber divorce is as simple as hitting delete.

Cyber family: You've heard of a home page? This is your home page. All you need is to furnish it with some clip art.

Cyber baby: You may need to make some additions to your home page to accommodate this little bundle of cyber joy. Changing nappies has never been so easy.

美食 · 娱乐 · 休闲 TEL: 68997124 68311626

ZiyiXuan Baochi Lou 紫怡轩鲍翅楼

3rd Floor Building B,
Donghuan Guangchang,
29 Dongzhong jie,
Dongcheng District
东城区东中街 29 号东环广场 B 幢 3 层
11:00-14:30, 17:00-22:00
6856, 9388

Beijing Roast Duck 北京烤鸭店

Building 3, Tuanjie Lake, Chaoyang District
朝阳区团结湖北口 3 号楼
11:40-14:00, 17:00-21:30
6852, 4003

Bianyifang Roast Duck Restaurant 便宜坊

2A Chongwenmenwai Dajie, Chongwen District
崇文区崇文门大街甲 2 号
11:00-14:00, 17:00-21:30
Tel: 6712.0505

CLUB GREEN BEST CLUB IN BEIJING

ADD: Land mark Tower 1/F 8 North Dong San Huan Road. chaoyang District Beijing

地址: 北京市朝阳区东三环北路 8 号亮马河大厦一层

TEL: (010) 65906999 65906688 — 2988

COME & BE AS COOL AS —
GREEN



北京好世界阳光酒店 BEIJING FANTASY WORLD CLUB

It offers a full range of services, including fine rooms, restaurants and entertainment centre.

FU LIN Seafood Restaurant: more than 100 kinds of fresh seafood are now 20% off.

Korean Flavour Restaurant: newly open, supply Korean food and barbecue. 20% off.

Entertainment Centre: Bowling, billiards, karaoke and gymnasium.

Tel: (010) 68843388-718/620

Add: 1 Gu Cheng Nan Lu Shijingshan District

(100 meters in west from Gu Cheng metro station)

电话: (010) 68843388-718/620 (详见店内海报)

地址: 石景山区古城南路 1 号(地铁古城站西 100 米)

Spice Orchids Thai Restaurant

Welcome to our Spice Orchids Thai Restaurant.

Our features are undeniable: Walls decorated in purple and deep wine red; colors that really work together to produce a harmony; food that lie on in its contrasts; chefs that create a wonderful medley of hot, cool, sour, sweet, crunchy and soft dishes. Fish cake, deep-fried Taro, Green Pepper & Red Curry Fried with Beef and Minced meat fried with Basil leaves are not to be missed.

And, we have an unique Chinese name, Tai Xiang La, which means Spicy Thai Restaurant, verbally; and Very Good Smell, phonetically.

You're likely to satisfy your taste buds for a mere of RMB18 up, with weekday set lunch from RMB25-50. Tasty and inexpensive. A very good casual dining experience.

Add: 8 South Street, Guan Dong Dian, Chaoyang District.

(North of Kerry Centre Hotel and the back of Hot-Point Disco)

Tel: 6591.7726 Fax: 6591.7926

Donglaishun Restaurant

东来顺

5/F, Xindong'an Plaza, Wangfujing
Da jie, Dongcheng District
东城区王府井大街 新东安商场 5 层
11:00-14:00, 17:00-21:30
6528.0932

Fan Shi Gang

饭是纲

140 Andingdajie, Dongcheng District
东城区安定大街 140 号
9:00-23:00
64042187

New French Restaurant Now Open!

来过罗兰·加洛斯吗?

不知你有没有来过罗兰·加洛斯, 有没有尝过这里鲜嫩的蜗牛, 有没有就着奶酪品味波尔多的葡萄酒, 有没有燃着古巴雪茄欣赏网球公开赛? 侍者是彬彬有礼的, 还能把每款酒, 每种烟的来历娓娓道出。氛围是典雅的, 还有温暖浪漫的烛光。

这里还有独具特色的网球文化主题服务: 专门从海外订购的网球历史文化资料, 精彩纷呈的网球主题活动和球友内部通讯, 主题网站与“一网打尽”网球网络联盟。

Spoil yourself with genuine French fare and ambiance and a superb variety of wines at the **Roland Garros** restaurant. Close a full evening of relaxation with a choice of dramatic desserts, coffees, and Cuban cigars.

ROLAND GARROS
RESTAURANT & BAR, BEIJING, CHINA

罗兰·加洛斯 餐厅

罗兰·加洛斯网球主题法式餐厅
Roland Garros Restaurant
Open: 11:00-24:00 Daily

地址: 朝阳区农展南路朝阳网球俱乐部北门一层
Address: North Entrance Chaoyang Tennis Club
Nongzhan Nanlu, Chaoyang District
Telephone: 6508-9100

Chinese Workers at Risk in Israel

Chinese worker injured in suicide bombing in Israel faces uncertainty over compensation

By Ivy Zhang

Lin Jinmou, a 41-year-old Chinese worker who lost his left arm and left leg in the April 12 suicide bombing blast in Jerusalem last year, may have been relieved to have returned to his hometown in Fujian Province Tuesday.

But he now faces hefty medical bills and living problems and does not know what compensation he will receive to pay for all of it.

Israel's National Insurance Institute is responsible to pay him compensation, according to Amir Sagie, press officer of the Israeli Embassy in China.

But so far, no compensation package has been agreed and Lin faces an agonizing wait before finding out whether he will be able to pay for his treatment.

It's an issue that needs resolving, particularly in the light of last Sunday's bomb blast, in which two Palestinian suicide bombers killed 22 people and wounded more than 100 in a crowded part of Tel Aviv.

Two Chinese workers were killed in the blast and seven were injured. At present, Israel is estimated to host 20,000 Chinese workers, half legal, half illegal.

Who'll be the family breadwinner now?

Lin went to Israel in order to pay for his home and children's school fees. Before going to Israel in December 2001, he did odd jobs as a remodeling worker in and around his village in Daitou town, Putian city, Fujian Province.

He has three children, the eldest aged 20 and youngest 12. His wife Shen Jinying, 40, used to work as a substitute primary school teacher in the village. Now she has to spend all her time looking after Lin.

In his village which has about three thousand people, 40 to 50 have been to Israel in the last two or three years. Lin was told it was easy to earn a good salary in Israel.

"We tried to persuade him not to go there because the situation is unstable and sometimes dangerous," Shen Guofeng, Lin's brother-in-law said. "But he was determined to go. He had no fixed income and borrowed 30,000 to 40,000 yuan to build his house. If he stayed here, he would never be able to repay the debts."

After weighing the pros and cons, Lin started his journey with a dozen other workers through China Zhongfu Overseas Labor Services.

Before setting out, his debt deepened as he had to borrow 80,000 to 90,000 yuan to cover the agency fees. However, he expected to make that amount of money working as a remodeling worker at a local construction company in Israel in a year.

His dream was smashed four months later.

About 4 pm on April 12 last year, a suicide bomber triggered an attack, leaving two Chinese dead and two injured, at west Jerusalem's Mahane Yehuda market.

"The four of us were waiting at a bus stop after buying vegetables at the market," Lin said. "A few moments later, a bus arrived. Cai Xianyang and Lin Chunmei (who were killed in the blast) went on the bus in front of me. When I stepped on the bus, I heard a loud bang. Then I knew nothing."

Eighteen days later, Lin woke up at the Shearei Zedek Hospital. Seeing his family visiting him, he initially thought he was at home in Fujian. He even asked them if they had securely locked up their motorbikes. Then he fell back into sleep. He regained consciousness two days later.

"They told me I was in Israel," Lin said. "I reached out to touch my left arm and leg and felt nothing. In the beginning, I couldn't believe it. Then I felt desperate. I was disabled and my family would have no income."

In addition to his arm and leg amputation, Lin suffered burn scars and hearing loss. He said he was impressed with Israel's medical care and was satisfied with his treatment in Israel after the blast.

But Lin's biggest concern now is whether he can get compensation to live on for the rest of his life.

Who can help me?

Lin returned to China with his wife last Friday. His flight to Fujian was booked for Tuesday noon, which meant he only had one day to deal with the Israeli Embassy on compensation during his stopover.

Lin cannot speak mandarin well so Shen Guofeng, Lin's brother-in-law, played a key role when they approached the embassy on Monday.

Shen produced two documents the insurance institute had told him to present to the embassy. One was a three-page medical summary issued by the hospital which detailed Lin's injuries, medical treatment and recommendations. The other was a one-page paper in Hebrew issued by the insurance institute.

"Before coming back to China, the insurance institute told us to approach the consul directly at the embassy. When we presented the two documents to him, the consul would have the responsibility to talk with us on the compensation issue," Shen said. "But the consul did not come out to meet us."

Shen said the insurance institute was committed to give them a letter within three months of Lin's return to China, detailing the compensation he would receive.

"The insurance institute told us the embassy would know what to do when we presented the two documents," said Shen. "Instead the embassy told us they had no idea what to do with the documents we gave them. We are very disappointed."

The embassy said the insurance institute had not given them any direct instructions and that the only role the embassy could perform is to help with communication between victims and the insurance institute.

"We waited in the embassy from 9 am till 4 pm. During this period, only a Chinese woman came out to ask what

we wanted," Shen said. "She said the embassy was having a meeting and later asked us whether we had other documents issued by the insurance institute, as they didn't know what to do with the documents we had given them."

Shen said he later called the translator at the insurance institute and asked the institute to call the embassy.

The translator told him to prepare a paper detailing their requests such as easy access to clinics, convenient housing for disabled and regular replacement of hearing aid and prosthetic devices. Then the embassy would transfer the requests to the insurance institute.

"I was told such a process would take a long time," said Shen. "This is what we are worried about. Lin has to receive further treatment now."

Comforting words

Amir Sagie, press officer of the Israeli Embassy in China said Lin should rest assured that the embassy would serve as a link for communication with the insurance institute.

"At the embassy here in Beijing, we have handled the cases of Chinese workers who have been killed and injured by terrorists in Israel," he said. "Nobody is being neglected. Nobody has been denied compensation."

"The insurance institute is dealing with thousands and thousands of cases. We have been victims of terrorism not only the last few years. We've been suffering for 50 years now," he said.

Since April 2002, six Chinese workers have been killed in suicide attacks in Israel and more than ten have been injured.

Lin Jinmou and his wife Shen Jinying arrived at Beijing airport last Friday.

Photo by Cheng Tieliang



Getting Along With the Government

By Sun Ming

An owner of a chain supermarket in Shenyang has brought five lawsuits against local government agencies over the past two years following what he thought were unreasonable inspections during which valuable merchandise was confiscated.

In December last year, a CCTV reporter went to Shenyang, the capital of Liaoning Province, to investigate the case. CCTV1 broadcast the investigation last Friday.

Jinfeng Store, which has four branches in Shenyang, received inspections from over 10 departments of the local government on 39 different occasions since it opened in 2000.

The owner, Jiang Caiyi, a retired military officer, told CCTV that the inspectors confiscated his goods each time, offering dubious reasons for doing so.

"I was forced to become a lawyer," said Jiang who passed the National Lawyer Qualification Examination in March last year. Now Jiang is planning to open a legal firm, also called Jinfeng.

"I've put nearly 80 percent of my energy into dealing with these unreasonable and endless inspections," Jiang complained to CCTV that he had no more energy to develop his business.

In May 2001, Jiang brought his first lawsuit against the Tiexi District branch of the Shenyang Business Bureau, which had confiscated two electrical appliances from his store in April 2001. Tiexi District branch promptly returned his goods and Jiang withdrew the lawsuit.

In 2002, Jiang filed four lawsuits against the Shenyang Tobacco Bureau and three of its branches, which had confiscated cigarettes worth a total of 150,000 yuan since May 2000.

Jiang won two of the lawsuits and lost the other two. "Up to now, I still haven't got any of my cigarettes back. The law states they should return my cigarettes within ten days of the judgment," Jiang told CCTV.

Jiang told CCTV of the inspections he experienced from 2000:

□ Jinfeng store encountered its first inspection the first day it opened on May 28, 2000.

"Eight inspectors, who claimed to be the members of the Heping

District branch of the Shenyang Business Bureau, came to my supermarket. Some of them wore uniforms, some didn't. They said I had promoted my supermarket illegally because I used the word 'the cheapest' in the ad fliers. They confiscated all of our ad fliers. According to advertisement law, words like 'the best' and 'the cheapest' are prohibited in ads. I found this out later.

"I thought the matter was over. But five months later, I was informed by the department that I should pay a fine of between 10,000 and 20,000 yuan. I was shocked. I still owed a lot of debts because I borrowed heavily to open Jinfeng. After bargaining, I paid 3,000 yuan. But according to Advertisement Law, I should only have been reprimanded, not fined."

To confirm the basis of the 3,000 yuan fine, CCTV asked to interview the Heping District branch last month. The request was turned down.

□ One month after the first inspection, Jinfeng had a visit from the Shenyang Tobacco Bureau in June 2000.

"Three inspectors from the Shenyang Tobacco Bureau insisted that my cigarettes were fakes and asked our saleswoman to hand three packs over. She refused, so one of the men jumped inside the counter and took away three packs of China cigarettes worth a total of 130 yuan. The man left a note which said 'Temporary confiscation of three packages of cigarettes.' But up to now, I still haven't got them back or been told whether they were fake."

□ Three inspectors from the Tiexi District branch of Shenyang Business Bureau confiscated 15 bottles of Fen alcohol worth a total of 600 yuan in Jinfeng in January 2001.

"They said that my Fen alcohol was fake. After they confiscated my alcohol, I asked the supplier to fax me the qualified certificate for the alcohol. With the help of a friend who has an acquaintance in the bureau, I got my alcohol back one month later."

□ Inspectors from the Tiexi District branch of the Shenyang Business Bureau confiscated two electrical appliances in Jinfeng

in May 2001. The reason given was that the supermarket was too small to sell these kinds of products.

"About 15 people came to my store in Tiexi District at 9 o'clock in the evening. We were very happy because we thought they were customers. But when one man saw a Panasonic microwave and a Haier air conditioner, he said 'How can you sell the microwave and air conditioner in your small store?' I knew they just wanted to find an excuse to confiscate something."

"This time I decided I wouldn't just put up with it. I filed a lawsuit against the bureau with Tiexi District Court. The bureau returned my products soon after that and asked me to withdraw the lawsuit."

□ In September 2001, a few days before the Mid-autumn Festival, the Shenyang Health Bureau asked Jiang to pay 3,000 yuan as a fee for checking the quality of his moon cakes.

"They took away ten cakes. But before they left, they asked me to pay 300 yuan as the fee for examination for each cake. According to China's Quality Law, the government has the right to examine the quality of stores' products, but it can't charge stores for the quality examination."

On December 22, Li Wei, the deputy director of the Shenyang Health Bureau, told CCTV that they would return the money to Jinfeng soon. Li admitted that his staff members had made a mistake.

Should Jinfeng's cigarettes be confiscated?

The Shenyang Tobacco Bureau inspected Jinfeng Store most frequently. They inspected Jinfeng 14 times from August 2000 and confiscated cigarettes worth 15,000 yuan altogether.

"Up to now, they haven't returned a single cigarette or told me the quality examination results," Jiang told CCTV.

Gao Jinzhe, deputy director of the Shenyang Tobacco Bureau, was interviewed by CCTV reporter Yang Chun on November 22.

Gao: The cigarettes in my office were confiscated from Jin-

feng Store over the past two years. We pay a lot of attention to fake cigarettes.

Yang: Jiang told me that your inspectors didn't label his cigarettes as having come from Jinfeng on the scene. How do you know the cigarettes that the check center examined are Jinfeng cigarettes?

Gao: I don't think we should label the products on the scene.

Yang: According to Administrative Law, you should reveal the examination results to Jiang within seven days of confiscating the cigarettes. But as far as I know, you never did. Why?

Gao: I admit that we made some mistakes in that respect. But some legal regulations are too outdated to suit today's society. I still believe that the Jinfeng cigarettes are fakes.

Yang: How can your inspectors judge whether a retailer's cigarettes are fake or not on the scene?

Gao: They can tell just through looking at them. But there is no legal basis for this. So we usually ask for help from the Liaoning Province Tobacco Check Center.

Yang: So it's hard to tell whether cigarettes are fake or not on the scene?

Gao: Yes.

Why did Jiang think his stores had been inspected so often?

Jiang: I think because I didn't 'say hello to them' before I opened Jinfeng. I didn't bribe them, to be frank.

Yang: Did your friends advise you to offer bribes?

Jiang: Yes. They said it was necessary to get along with the authorities. They advised me to bribe some 'important people', but I refused.

Yang: Why?

Jiang: I thought that only people who plan to conduct illegal business offer bribes.

Yang: Have you ever invited inspectors for a meal?

Jiang: Never.

Yang: Are all the departments that have inspected Jinfeng unreasonable?

Jiang: No. The Shenyang Tax Bureau and local police stations have never charged us at random. They usually came to Jinfeng once or twice a year. It's reasonable. I didn't want to file lawsuits against anyone. But I can't tolerate this situation any more.

(Source: CCTV)

Several papers were interested in Huang Shan's story and interviewed him. But very few published his story. "They wanted to write a sad and sentimental story about a vagrant singer, and were mostly disappointed when they found I was happy and contented with my life," he laughs.

Subway

Superstar

By Zhao Pu

Two teenagers approached Huang Shan as they heard him singing one of his songs *Nowhere to Run* in the subway. They didn't look at him. Instead one of them picked up a CD of Huang Shan's music, put it in his CD player and started listening to it.

"30 yuan each," Huang said to them. "Which song do you like?"

The two boys didn't respond and just kept listening to his CD. After a while, one of them took out his wallet and left 60 yuan to Huang for his disc.

"People often pay more than I ask. Sometimes people even give me 100 yuan for a CD," Huang explains.

Though he signed up with arts company Poloarts a year ago, Huang Shan prefers to spend most of his time in the unpretentious surroundings of the subway near the Capital Cinema in Xidan. "I'm still a busker, just as I was before I joined the company," says Huang. The one-year cooperation with Poloarts has made hardly any crucial change to Huang's life. The company is releasing his first albums this month, but he still spends every afternoon and evening in his subway, greeting passers-by with his songs and music, and collecting enough money to cover his bed and breakfast.

Subway singer

"People call me 'subway singer'," Huang smiles. It seems to be the only true and proper name for him, simple and impersonal, which gives him comfort and confidence.

In summer 2000, Huang came to Beijing from his hometown Huangshan (Yellow Mountain) in Anhui province, and began to perform in the subway. In the past two and a half years, he has become a regular part of the subway scene and has made a name in this underground community. The happiest thing for him is making a lot of new friends with the people who like his music.

Poloarts found him in his subway in 2001, and contracted him last year. Many people say Huang is lucky to win the favor of a famous entertainment company, which is still a dream for most other fringe singers scattered among the numerous subways in the city.

But involvement with Poloarts has made little difference to the rhythm of Huang's daily life. He still cherishes his commitment to his audience in the subway. "I give people instant inspiration and pleasure in the subway," he proudly declares. And that, he says, is his best way of communication with his audience.

The first time he was invited to perform at a party organized by Poloarts, the company gave him a thorough image makeover. "They brought me to a beauty salon and took care of my skin and hairstyle, and bought me new clothes," he says.

When he got on stage with this new polished image it all went horribly wrong. "It was a disaster! I forgot how to sing in the bright and fresh costume and makeup provided by the company," Huang says he was in a bad state on that occasion. "State" is a crucial thing for him, and he is only in the right state when singing in the subway, natural and relaxed.

The next time Poloarts arranged for him to perform — at a Christmas Eve party last month — Huang refused to be packaged up. "I just wore my own casual clothes which I wear everyday in my subway performances," he says. "There was a hole in my jeans and I skipped the makeup." Huang even brought his own guitar for the show. He felt comfortable and had a successful performance. "My friends said I was great," he smiles.

Huang's real fanbase are the people who live nearby and walk through the subway regularly. They usually greet him with a smile and sometimes they will also have a small chat with him. But few of them know he used to be a doctor in a hospital in his hometown, and that he left a safe and peaceful lifestyle behind, to pursue the "ideal and pure" life he has now.

Leaving home

Huang Shan is not his real name. When he left home for Beijing in 2000, he gave himself this name to remember his hometown, the beautiful Yellow Mountain (Huangshan). "I thought maybe I wouldn't return home," he says.

Huang was the second child in his family. He had a strict mother, who always scolded him for his poor performance at school. Both his elder brother and younger sister did well in their studies. He was made to feel inferior to his siblings, and was aware his mother didn't like him at all.

When he was in grade five in elementary school, his music teacher said to the class that Huang was the best singer in the class. "For the first time, I discovered a strength I had," says Huang. "That made me excited.

There was something which could make my mother proud of me."

Singing brought him confidence in his early life. He learned to play the guitar in high school, and began to write songs in that period. When he was about to enter college his father brought him to an art college and encouraged him to choose music as his major. He refused.

"When I saw the way they sang in that college, I wanted to escape," he remembers. "I've always been a person who fears regulations and rules. I'd rather sing in my own style." Instead, he entered a medicine school.

After graduation Huang joined a big hospital in his hometown. "The work there

was very easy. I worked only several hours per day, and the salary was satisfying," he says. "That kind of safe and leisurely life was not for me. To me, it seemed like a waste of my life living like that."

A chance came in 1997. He came to Beijing to take part in a national singer contest. But he quit the contest when he found that participants from

his hometown who had failed in the provincial contests had somehow been selected for the finals. "It was not fair play. I was suspicious."

Nevertheless, the contest helped him get to know some music producers. He revealed his dream of becoming a pop singer to them, and was told that first he had to have enough funds to pay to produce a CD. He sang at a bar in Beijing for a while.

"The bar owner didn't pay me, and I stayed there just as well as many journalists often visited his bar. And the chance of being discovered by them was my compensation."

Actually no one discovered him as a future star. So Huang returned home the following year to earn money to produce his CD. Instead of rejoining the hospital, he started his own business. He sold snake medicine and opened

the first bar in Huangshan. His medicine was successful, but the bar, sadly, was not.

Idealist

Two years later in 2000, he came back to Beijing with no funds for his CD. "This time, before I came back to the city, I suddenly realized music was not my ideal. A free and passionate lifestyle is my real ideal. Singing is a method of achieving this lifestyle."

Before he came to Beijing, Huang had already decided to sing in a subway. "I wish to touch other people with my songs, at the same time as making a living by singing," he planned. But it was hard at the beginning.

"I was too shy to go down and sing to the public, I thought it was like begging." He still remembers his debut subway performance. "I put on a big hat, and wore sunglasses. I hesitated a while and had to be pushed forward by a friend," he says.

The subway path he picked was a quiet one. He made sure that no one else would fight with him for the place. His first patron was a middle-aged man. "He listened a while and then he left 100 yuan in my box." This was a pleasant surprise for Huang.

He finished early on that first day, with that 100 yuan in hand. He returned to the small hostel he lived in in the south of the city. For the following month, he spent one hour wandering around the subway everyday, collecting his nerves before performing.

New year's eve of 2001 was a special day for Huang. "It seemed that nobody in the city slept that night," he says. The crowd listening to him grew until it blocked the subway. He worried that nearby policemen might blame him for causing a traffic jam so he left for a while and came back when the crowd had dispersed. But as soon as he started singing, people gathered for him again. "That was really exciting. That wasn't about making money, it was about appreciation and communication."

Huang says he liked the feeling that everybody was looking at him but that nobody knew who he was, in this big city. "When they introduce me, they just call me 'subway singer'. I like this title," he says.

Several papers were interested in his story and interviewed him. But very few published his story. "They wanted to write a sad and sentimental story about a vagrant singer, and were mostly disappointed when they found I was happy and contented with my life," he laughs.



Huang's lunch is often a KFC meal.



The erhu player leaves the subway when Huang arrives for the afternoon shift.

Huang nestles in a small hostel in the south of the city.



Selling his CDs is the main way for Huang to pay the bills.

Photos by Robert



Blue and white doucai jar by Xiong Hanzhong, Yanhuang Art Gallery.

By Iris Miao

The love of ceramics must run through the veins of the Chinese, the crowds of enthusiastic visitors to three on-going porcelain exhibitions in Beijing this week are undeniable evidence.

The exhibitions, though organized by different companies, all focus on artists from Jingdezhen, in Jiangxi Province. Over 100 artists covering a time span of a 100 years are represented, from the famous group "Eight Friends from Zhushan," active during the late Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) through the Republic of China (1911-1949), to the youngest contemporary artist, who is only 26 years old.

Two of the exhibitions are being held simultaneously at Yanhuang Art Gallery, the third is at the Arts and Crafts Shopping Center, in Wangfujing Street. The several hundreds of works on display and for sale, together colorfully illustrate the development of modern and contemporary ceramics.

The exhibition at Wangfujing, helped by its location and the presence of an artist doing on-the-spot painting of roughcast porcelain, has attracted thousands of visitors since it opened on New Year's Day.

The bar is high for any ceramics artist in Jingdezhen, for the fires of kilns have been burning there for at least 1,700 years. Acknowledged by the imperial court of the Song Dynasty and known around the world as the home of the famed blue and white porcelain for nearly a millennium, Jingdezhen has produced a series of high points in terms of craftsman-



On-the-spot painting attracts many viewers.

Embracing the Art of Earth and Fire



One of the characteristics of contemporary porcelain painting is the diversity of the subject matter.

Photos by Miao Yajie

ship, variety, style and artistic pursuit in the over 2,000 years history of porcelain.

The glamour of the past is both a source of pride and a heavy burden. The past 100 years have witnessed the most dramatic ups and downs for the art of porcelain making. However, judging by the three current exhibitions, it is clear that the modern and contemporary artists from Jingdezhen have made undeniable contributions to the furthering of the art with their individuality, innovation, and characteristics of the time.

A few lotus leaves in blue and white, birds and willow trees in *doucai*, or joined color, is a rare piece among the exhibits, jointly produced by late ceramics master Wang Xihuai, and his younger brother Wang Enhuai.

"Technically and artistically, this one is a masterpiece," says Liu Yujing, an organizer of one of the exhibitions at Yanhuang Art Gallery. "The technique of applying blue and white to depict the lotus leaves is called *qinghua fenshui*, the color varies from dense to thin, from heavy blue to bright blue,

you can see the changing of the color, but the surface of the porcelain is smooth. Wang Xihuai was a master of this technique."

Touching the surface of the plate, it is as smooth as an eggshell. But without the guidance of an expert, one may pass by the piece as an ordinary bird and flower composition, unaware of the underlying artistry.

Three exhibitions offering over 700 pieces from Jingdezhen at the same time might be seen as overkill. But in fact, the three exhibitions are slightly different in emphasis, in terms of artists and their work, providing the market with a wide choice both in price and in artistic value.

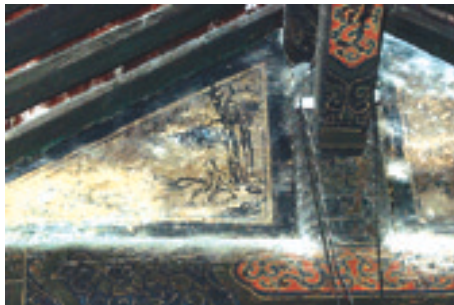
Furthermore, the market for modern and contemporary porcelain collection is maturing. Cui Jinglin, organizer of one of the exhibitions at Yanhuang Gallery has been in the business for over 40 years, in recent years, he has held exhibitions focusing on modern and contemporary masters every year. "Many of my buyers are collectors," says Cui. "The market value increases by an average of 10 percent every

year, for artists such as Xiong Hanzhong and Dai Ronghua, the increase is even greater."

Cui's estimation is backed up by the organizers of the two other exhibitions. The market for modern and contemporary master artists is quite stable, and the authenticity of their exhibits are ensured, as the organizers all know or have personal relationships with the artists or their families, and the works mainly come directly from their workshops.

For novice collectors, Cui's suggestion is to first read about the subject, to gain a basic knowledge. Then depending on the amount one is prepared to outlay, start with the younger artists before focusing on the works of the masters, as current prices for younger artists' works are relatively low, and there is much scope for appreciation.

Embracing Earth and Fire — Arts and Crafts Shopping Center, Wangfujing
9:00 am - 8:00 pm, till Jan 15.
Exhibitions of the Ceramics Masters of this Century — Yanhuang Art Gallery
9:00 am-16:30 pm, till Jan 19



Colored Paintings inside Doumu Hall remain intact. Photo by Yang Ying

Ming and Qing Decoration Uncovered at Dongyue Temple

By Wang Yuan / He Zuo

Wall inscriptions and well-preserved colored paintings have been discovered during the course of the on-going restoration of the west courtyard of Dongyue Temple near Chaoyangmen, also known as the Folk Customs Museum.

After removing a false ceiling built by more recent residents in the *Doumu* Hall — colored paintings from the Ming and Qing dynasties were found covering the beams, brackets and heads of the rafters in the three rooms. The paintings, depicting flowers and plants, figures, and landscapes, remain mostly intact.

The design and the dragon pattern on the eaves and horizontal supports were standard in the imperial court, the contents of the wall paintings in Suzhou style all come from the classics, and are elaborately rendered, according to Zhao Hongchen, a specialist on colored painting.

There were two halls in Dongyue Temple for worshipping Lu Ban, the god of carpenters. The one with the newly discovered inscriptions on the wall was built later than the other.

The story goes that during the late Qing Dynasty and early Republic of China, builders erected the first Lu Ban Hall in the west yard of Dongyue Temple, where they gathered to offer sacrifices every year. Later, the carpenters began to gather there to worship too, leading to something of a territorial dispute.

The carpenters argued that as Lu Ban was the founding father of their trade, they certainly had the right to pay their respects to him there. Eventually, a second Lu Ban Hall was built, so the builders and the carpenters each had their own place of worship, and the dispute was settled.

The inscriptions on the wall of the second Lu Ban Hall record the building of the hall and the carving of seven stone tablets, which were found during the clean-up before the restoration project began last November. The finds provide important information and help fill in several gaps in the architectural history of the period.

"These antiques are now under proper protection, and await for the experts to carry out further study and work out a complete plan for protection and reconstruction," says Han Xiuzhen, curator of the museum.

It's All in the Design

By Yu Shanshan

An exhibition launched last week offers many variations on the idea of contemporary visual design. Staged at the Loft New Media Art Space, the show is organized by Beijing's Capital Corporation Image Institution (CCII), for the winning designs of the 80th and 81st New York-based Art Directors Club awards.

Complementing this show, is an exhibition of winning designs from the 79th ADC awards, at the CCII Visual Art Design Center.

For 81 years, the Art Directors Club, with its annual exhibition, has been home to the world's leading designers, many of whom have gone on to win honors in advertising, graphic design, interactive media, packaging, environmental design, photography and illustration. Its strength, according to CCII president Ren Baohua, lies in its "emphasis of the value of design."

In 1999, China participated for the first time in the ADC NY Annual Awards Traveling Show, which visits over 20 countries. The China leg is organized by the Beijing based CCII.

Winning an award at the prestigious event is a sure sign of having "arrived" in the design world, and is often followed by admission to Alliance Graphique International, a prominent international design association based in Switzerland.

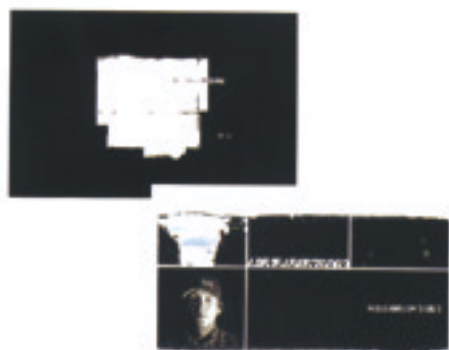
The exhibits seem not so much to display merchandise as to venerate them. In a shoe advertisement, "Make Room for Shoes," which won gold at last year's awards, there is not even one shoe to be seen, just a totally empty store, a baby's bedroom, a kettle and a kitchen.

"They conduct their research with terrifying thoroughness and render it into the most simple forms," says Ren, "Here you see them expressing both artistic ideas and acute commercial themes."

However, for some works, "we can only try to imagine the original magic hiding underneath the picture, in a different cultural context," he points out. Language differences also restrict Chinese professionals from making full use of such international exchanges.



Prom — advertisement for Discovery.com, silver medal at 80th ADC awards.



Millennium Three—advertisement for www.m-three.com, New Media Distinctive Merit award at 80th ADC awards.



Shoobox—advertisement for Physicians for Human Rights, silver medal at 80th ADC awards.



Light—advertisement for Japan Lighting Design, silver medal at 80th ADC awards.

"When industries are competing at equal price and functionality, design is the only differential that matters," says Mark Dziersk, chairman of the Industrial Designers Society of America, echoing the credo first raised in the 1930s by Raymond Loewy, regarded as the father of modern industrial design.

Demand for these new design strategies is surging in China. The construction of the new city of Shenzhen in the early 1990s presented many opportunities for young designers, but many obstacles remain. "Chinese tend to doubt the contention that a seemingly simple design could bring greater profit for a product," says Ren.

As He Jun of Beijing Art Design College says, "They always ask, 'Is such a thing worth that much?' For a design, we need thorough investigation, but clients can't wait that long."

Another problem lies in Chinese design education.

"Many of my students don't really know why they study design. Rather than having a true passion for it, they merely imagine the profession may bring them more money," says He Jun.

"Chinese design education, in textbooks, only refers to painting and imitating, emphasizing beauty of decoration over real creativity," says Xiao Yong, a teacher at the Department of Graphic Design at the Central Academy of Fine Arts.

In Japan, however, Ren Baohua says, "they make everyone a potential designer." According to a survey made in Tokyo, one out of six people work in design related jobs. He Jun agrees with him, "Even a small paper folding toy sold by the roadside is full of creativity."

The appearance of the International Design Hall at the China Beijing International High-Tech Expo, in May last year, was taken as a sign that the government is recognizing design as an independent industry.

According to Ren, the future of Chinese visual design lies with those who have the confidence to win ADC awards, such as Wang Xu, whose promotional poster for an exhibition in Shanghai won a merit award in 2000.

New Era of Asian Fiber-based Art

By Yu Shanshan

China is a nation of textiles, the production of which dates back as far as the Paleolithic Period. Artists who work with fibers and modern-art lovers need no longer be mutually exclusive groups, thanks to events such as the Third Asia Fiber Art Exhibition, which closed last Thursday.

The annual exhibition, staged at the Academy of Arts and Design of Tsinghua University, is modeled on the International Biennale of Tapestry, which was held in Lausanne, Switzerland until it closed due to lack of sponsorship in 1996, when it closed due to lack of sponsorship. In 2000, the academy created "From Lausanne to Beijing — 2000 International Tapestry Art Exhibition," providing a new platform for those dedicated artists from home and abroad.

The exhibition emphasized the work of Asian artists, with works from China, Japan, Korea, Indonesia and Thailand, as well as two from Australia.

In a piece titled *Gogyo*, by five Japanese students of Chinese-Japanese Syouai Wang, five circular Yin Yang symbols made with materials of different textures represent the five elements; gold, wood, water, fire and earth. Of a Buddha figure titled "Mandala" by Wang, the artist said, "Such figures and introspective emotion we put in our works are remote to the west but close to all of us."

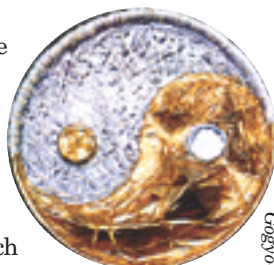
Yet, Asian artists bow to the same trends as their brethren anywhere. One of these trends is toward "smaller or more easily portable fiber art works," says professor Tian Qing, director of Tsinghua's department of Dye, Textile and Fashion Design, who, along with vice director Jia Jingsheng, is co-organizer of the exhibition.

When Tian and Jia took down and packed up their own works, *Blend with Sense and Sensibility* and *Variety Face*, it only took them a few minutes and a small box.

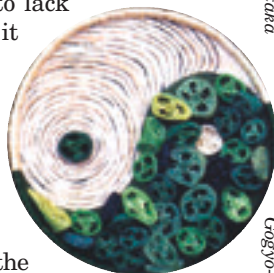
Apart from eastern philosophies and religion, global issues such as environmental protection and the pressures of modern city life are another major source of inspiration for artists working with fibers.

For South Korean artist Jung-ju Kim, simplicity is the key. For his work *Reconstruction*, he came up with the idea of using used coffee grounds mixed with water to dye a piece of Korean paper, a process he refers to as "recycling."

While high-tech machines undoubtedly help artists realize more possibilities, primitive methods can still serve. For Jae-bun Rhee from South Korea, the beautiful changes in the quality of daylight from his apartment window in Seoul affected him so powerfully he spent two or three months by a loom, recording his impressions of the beauty.



Gogyo-gold, Mihoko Kitakata



Gogyo-wood, Nobuo Kanai



Gogyo-water, Kaoru Hosono



Gogyo-fire, Kei Fujii

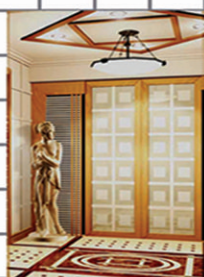


Gogyo-earth, Tomoko Hamu

品牌装修送品牌保洁

采用无甲醛板材及进口环保水性涂料
使您的住宅远离装修污染

为您的家庭量身打造
装修施工方案



家居保洁 商业保洁

To provide cleaning and maintenance service
for a graceful living and working space

美奥保洁

Meiao Houskeeping

优质服务队伍
Efficient service team

专业进口设备
Advanced equipment

Tel: 8401 0926

8401 8543

BeiJing Jia Yu Hua Decoration Co.,Ltd

地址: 北京市朝阳区亮马桥路光明大厦8层1806室
电话: (010) 8455 2536 (嘉宾专线) 64678822-1806
传真: (010) 8455 2530
Add: Room 1806, 8F, Guangming Plaza, Liangmaqiao Road,
Chaoyang, Beijing, China
Tel: (010) 8455 2536 (嘉宾专线) 64678822-1806
FAX: (010) 8455 2530

加裕华装饰

Sunrise, the First Musical of the New Year

By Wang Chunzhu

Adapted from renowned Chinese dramatist Cao Yu's *Sunrise*, the musical *Sunrise* premiered last Friday night at the Poly Theatre.

Sunrise tells the story of Chen Bailu (played by soprano Pan Li), an innocent country girl who blooms into a social butterfly in cosmopolitan Shanghai in the 1930s. The sophisticated young lady almost loses her soul to the indulgence of upper class society, until the day she runs into her childhood sweetheart Fang Dasheng (played by baritone Miao Changyong). Fang vows to take Chen back home, but Chen is too ashamed to follow. Finally, she commits suicide



Photo by Cui Jun

at the break of dawn.

The audience was deeply struck by Chen's tragic farewell

to life, and by the moving duet performed by the two lovers, *The Moon Tonight Is So Beautiful*.

ful, while Fang's aria, *Take You Back Home*, sung while holding the body of his beloved, brought the audience to tears.

Also in the spotlight was a cameo performance by top Chinese comedian Chen Peisi, the producer and art supervisor of *Sunrise*. He played a waiter in the endless parties and acted as witness to the whole love affair. Although it was his first "singing" role on stage, the audience gave him rousing applause for his great contribution to the musical.

The first performance of *Sunrise* ended last Saturday, and the second will take place February 12-15, at the Poly Theatre.



Korean Warriors Come to Beijing

By Wang Chunzhu

Korean actors Joo Jin-mo and Jung Woo-sung are rarely seen in Chinese mainland media, but they were welcomed with enthusiastic applause last Saturday in Beijing for China Film Group Corporation's premiere screening of *Musa the Warrior*.

The film presents a period epic set in 14th-century China about a group of Koryo (Korean) envoys who are arrested and sent into exile by the Ming government. On their way back to Korea, they manage to rescue a Ming princess from the rival Mongol forces. It is not long before General Choi (Joo Jin-mo) and Warrior Yeosol (Jung Woo-sung) form a romantic triangle with Princess Buyong (Zhang Ziyi), but their love is never explicitly pronounced.

Meanwhile spears pierce foreheads, swords cut off heads, arms and legs, and blood and sweat splash all over the screen. The movie displays the most realistic action scenes ever shown in Korean cinema.

However most of the scenes were so gory and that the faint of heart among the audience could not even bear to look. Good or bad? We will have to wait and see if *Musa the Warrior*, "a man's movie," will be equally loved by both male and female Chinese moviegoers. It opens to the public January 10, 2003.

By Wang Chunzhu

Tang Jiali's Nude Art, a newly released portrait collection by The People's Fine Arts Publishing House, the most prestigious one of its kind in China, created quite a stir in Beijing's art and literary circles. Tang Jiali signed her portrait album for fans in Wang Fu Jing Bookstore on December 29, last year.

Tang said she had no regret in doing it. "It all came up by accident, but I'm satisfied with what I've done," she said. "Nearly all the poses that I made in the collection were created by myself, and I enjoyed the professional work. I really want to have something to look back at when I grow older," she added.

Tang Jiali admitted that she was under great pressure. "The flood of responses from the public, both positive and negative, filled me with both joy and anxiety," Tang told *Beijing Today*, "to put it more exactly, much more anxiety than joy."

As for editor Guan Hong of The People's Fine Arts

Nude Art Hits Beijing



Photo provided by Tang Jiali

Publishing House, he believed that *Tang Jiali's Nude Art* reached a professional level that differentiated itself from other nude art portrait

collections. "The professional dancer gave her presentation of beauty and art with every single detail of her body language," he said.

Vegas Magician Appears in China

By Wang Chunzhu

Spring Festival 2003 has a special treat in store for Chinese audiences nationwide, as Brett Daniels of Las Vegas, "Prince of the Magic City," will perform on January 31 for CCTV's 2003 New Year's Eve party. The American magician was invited by CCTV directors to join the party after he amazed local fans during his tour in Shanghai and Guangzhou last October.

Currently one of Las Vegas' most popular magicians, Brett Daniels has a wealth of experience in magical entertainment, from large-scale illusions to legerdemain.

In addition to showing his magical world to television audiences across China, Brett Daniels will also conjure up eight performances for local magic fans at the Workers' Gymnasium in Beijing during the Spring Festival holidays.



Photo provided by Beijing Chinese Cross-Culture Ticketing Co., Ltd

WORLDWIDE



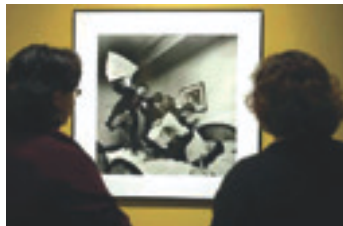
Reeve (left) and his wife Dana

Superman Actor Reeve Lands Back in Smallville

Christopher Reeve, the now-paralyzed actor who soared to movie fame as Superman, will soon lend some guidance to a young Clark Kent in an upcoming episode of the WB television series *Smallville*.

WB spokesman Paul McGuire on Monday confirmed a report by TV Guide that Reeve will guest star in February as a brilliant scientist who provides Clark with "revelatory insight into his superhero destiny."

(Reuters)



Patrons view a photo of the Beatles, engaged in a pillow fight.

Beatles Photos, Memorabilia on Display

Harry Benson was in the room when the Beatles found out they would be playing on *The Ed Sullivan Show*.

He photographed the Fab Four joking around, composing classics and flying to America.

Along with 80 of the photo-journalist's works of the dynamic group, the Albany Institute of History and Art has also collected memorabilia from local fans for its exhibit, "The Beatles: Now and Then."

Among the 100 objects on display: a 1964 "Flip Your Wig" game; inflatable dolls that were part of a soap display in 1966; a pin that reads: "I am a Beatles fan. In case of emergency call Paul or Ringo." (AP)

50 Years Later, Crowds Still Waiting for Godot

Fifty years have passed and Godot has yet to arrive, but Samuel Beckett's seminal work continues to pack theaters the world over.

The renowned Irish playwright did not attend the premiere of *Waiting for Godot* in a tiny Parisian theater half a century ago this week, but he need not have suffered any first-night nerves.

Although it initially met with indifference from the public and was panned by critics, Beckett's first play has since been hailed

a classic that transformed 20th century theater.

Even though its eponymous hero fails to put in an appearance in a play where, as one critic declared, "nothing happens—twice," *Waiting for Godot* still leaves audiences both bewildered and enraptured. (Reuters)



Natalie Imbruglia

Natalie Imbruglia to Wed Silverchair's Daniel Johns

One of Australia's most famous celebrity couples, chart-topping singer Natalie Imbruglia and Daniel Johns from grunge band Silverchair, have confirmed their engagement after months of media speculation.

In a brief statement released late on Monday, Johns' record company EMI said the couple had made the decision just before Christmas and they were extremely happy, as were their families.

"Daniel and Natalie have spent the holiday season together at home in Australia relaxing and celebrating," the statement said. "They have no immediate plans to marry."

The two, who have been together since 1999, were expected to divide their time between 27-year-old Imbruglia's Los Angeles home and 23-year-old Johns' house in the eastern Australian state of New South Wales. (Reuters)



Director Pedro Almodovar and Rosario Flores on the set of Sony Pictures Classics' Talk To Her

Spanish-Language Titles Hope for 'Tiger' Effect

Can Pedro Almodovar's *Talk to Her* speak to enough Academy members to win a surprise picture nomination?

That's the hope of distributor Sony Pictures Classics, which is launching a substantial campaign on the film's behalf — especially since Spain did not back the picture (which recently swept the European Film Awards) for foreign-language film. The Javier Bardem starrer *Mondays in the Sun* will bear the Spanish colors this run. Three years ago, Spain submitted Almodovar's *All About My Mother*. (Variety)

北京青年报
BEIJING TODAY
今日北京

《北京青年报·房地产版(英文版)》是《北京青年报》每周五推出的房地产及相关的广告专版,其英文版随报发行媒体优势不言而喻。根据房产客户的需求,让公司决策层直接阅读到相关内容,更具针对性,力事使客户的广告效力发挥至最大!

Real Estate Edition in English of Beijing Youth Daily, which is released every Friday, is a new advertising special one for the real estate and relative industries. The English Edition is delivered with the newspaper so the media advantage is very obvious. Real Estate Edition in English of Beijing Youth Daily, aiming at the advertiser's requests for the more pertinence, let's the policy-makers read the relative contact directly and try to reach the most advertisement effectiveness

HOT TEL: 13910419797

Dart Foreign Affairs Management Office

*Yard architecture with European style
*sufficient parking space, convenient traffic, complete facilities and offering service around the day
**Dart Commerce Office

1. it is located between CBD center and Guomao
2. favourable price: RMB3-4 yuan/squaremeter/day
3. telephone number: 65032597 or 64951817

**Dart Commerce Garden

1. it is located in the New Olympic sphere and it is between foreign account office and the Chinese-Japanese Hospital
2. favourable price: RMB 2.8-3.5 yuan/squaremeter/day
3. telephone number: 65032097 or 65032598

My company also has open separate foreign office building with 15000 square meter to be sold (including property right). It is located in north-eastern corner of Siyuan Bridge.

龙潭涉外公寓
LONGTAN APARTMENTS
from \$500/month. 34-110 sq.m (studio, 1-2 bedrooms)

- Fully furnished with satellite TV, IDD appliances.
- 24hour hot water, security, plentiful parking
- near the Temple of Heaven, Chongwen District

call now for more details.
67115358 67128749

WARWICK INTERNATIONAL APARTMENTS

Were we do our job... So you can do yours.

Special recommended villa at Lido are
\$6000/29spm/3br/fully furnished
TEL: (010) 67151166 ext. 3005/3006

赛特饭店 SCITECH HOTEL
BUSINESS FLOOR ON LINE

Business Floor Standard Room: USD98+15%SC
Business Floor Suite: USD138+15%SC
Business Floor Duplex Suite: USD300+15%SC

Express check in & check out Free use 3DDS Internet Lines
One free buffet in Coffee Shop per day Daily newspaper & Magazine Free use
swimming pool, GYM and sauna Free income faxes
Daily happy hours: (17:30-18:30) Welcome amenities on arrival

One piece free pressing per day
ADD: No. 22 Jianguomen wai Avenue, Beijing 10004 P.R. China
Tel: 8610-65123388
Fax: 8610-65123542
E-mail: sthotel@w.com.cn

City Plaza (Phase 1) And Palace International

Address: 3A, Shi Lipu, Chaoyang District, Beijing, China
Transportation: conveniently close to Chaoyang Road, Jingdong Express Way, and Ciyunsi Bridge of the 4th Ring Road

Services: Receptionist (Lobby), Tickets, Room Service, Home Maid, Room Cleaning, Home Appliance Repairs, and Flowers.

Rental Returns: USD900.00-2200per month
Current Occupation Rate: Offices: 100%; Department 95-75%
Business Tax: 0.4%
Management Fees: Palace International: RMB800 per square meter per month for Cleaning, Security (in-door and out-door) Vegetation, Elevators, Elevators, Minor Repairs, Room.

HOT TEL: 65561798

NWD (Hotels Investments) Limited
Beijing Kiu Lok Property Management Services Co Ltd

Member of the Hong Kong Listed New World Group invites high-calibre applications for the post of Leasing Executives:

Applications must possess:

- University degree
- presentable appearance
- excellent inter-personal and negotiation skill
- outgoing and aggressive personality
- fluency of spoken English and Putonghua
- sound sales / marketing experience and record
- corporate client connections a definite advantage

We offer attractive basic salary, commission and excellent career prospect. Please send both English and Chinese resume (with employment history, academic qualification, present and expected salary) together with a recent photo to The Sales

保罗大厦

◇ To South of Lan Dao building, it's new building
◇ Area: 3500m2-4000m2, 430spm/per floor
◇ This building is available to Bank, Negotiable Securities, Business Center, restaurant etc.
◇ 24hours security & hot water
Tel: 65958081 65958060
Mobil: 13701350511 13910890956
Add: No. 38 Chao Wai Avenue Chao Yang district Beijing

Sunflower Tower 盛福大厦

Investors: Philipp Holzmann Anlagen GmbH
Location: No. 37, Maizidian Street, Chaoyang District, Beijing Next to the Liang Ma Hotel. Located at the East 3rd Ring Road

Area: 817 square meters (based on architectural area) on 24th Floor
Asking rent: USD28/month/sqm (gross including management)
Communication: Supplied nodes IDD lines and 4MB of Capacity
ISDN is available
Elevator: 10 KONE elevators HVAC System: Four-pipe system
Amenities: Business center, Exhibition facilities, Retail space
Existing Tenants: Walt Disney, BASY, KONE, E-turtle Next work

Tel: 85275696-608

中国人寿大厦
CHINA LIFE TOWER

租售热线:
Enquiry hotline:
65886868

Developer:
Beijing Zhong Baixin Real Estate development Ltd
Designer:
RTKL Company

北京市国宾大厦
BEIJING AMBASSADOR MANSION
Ambassador Mansion
Good News!

Newly decorated apartments and offices
Apartment styles Available!
Range from 1 bedroom to 4 bedroom
USD1000/month up

Office Styles
Nex area from 20m2-1600m2
Ambassador Mansion
is an excellent choice for your business or life
For more information
Call us at 010-64384093
or fax on 010-64380148

寻求合作

本公司欲求东二环东三环附近写字楼式办公楼进行合作。要求: 手续合法, 价格合理, 中介免谈, 真心合作者请来电: **64055786**

this newspaper's perennial legal adviser: Beijing jingtao law office
undertaking mostly:

1. real estate business that buy, rent and manage kinds of licenses in Beijing;
2. foreign cases, maritime, finance, bond, important and difficult affairs;
3. debt, economy contract, foreign marriage cases, criminal defense;
4. notarizations;
5. holding perennial legal advisers for foreign enterprises, providing legal assistance;
6. providing law, regulations and contract versions in any languages.

TEL: 86-10-83521218 FAX: 86-10-83525557
http://www.venus-law.com e-mail: jtr@venus-law.com



Photos by Li Shuzhuan

Where There's Smoke

By Guo Yuandan

Going against the falling popularity of smoking, Pipe Café proudly invites customers to come in and puff to their hearts' content. The store's owner, Li Xiaodong, says he has no intention of encouraging people to smoke, he simply wants to create a space with the proper atmosphere for the true enjoyment of tobacco.

Through cigarettes, cigars, hookahs, chewing tobacco or snuff, there are many ways to get one's tobacco fix. Li's favorite, and the theme of his store, is the pipe. Pipes, with their elegant lines and wonderful aromas, have long been considered sophisticated and scholarly. Pipe Café has the goods to meet the tastes of any pipe smoker, offering 40 kinds tobacco. The most popular types include Evening Rose, Black Truffle, French Vanilla, Aromatic Dutch, Whiskey, Peaches Crème and Opium. All of the tobacco blends are hand crafted by Peter Stokkebye of Denmark, and fetch 15 yuan per bowl load. Customers

who burn through 100 yuan worth of tobacco will receive one free pipe full, along with a pipe in which to savor their prize.

The tobacco is only one half of the experience, though - the store is also well stocked with a wide range of pipes, ranging in price from 20 yuan to 3,000 yuan. Costs vary with the type of wood used, carving, finish, pull, appearance and less tangible standards. There are basically two kinds of pipe shapes, straight and bent, which then fall into many varieties, such as Bent Brandy, Bent Apple, Bent Dublin, Bent Pot and Horn.

With its wide range of outstanding products, comfortable atmosphere and good ventilation system, Pipe Café is a smoker's paradise, a great place to sit for a while and enjoy a pleasure frowned upon in less forgiving establishments.

Where: Pipe Café, south gate of Worker's Stadium, Chaoyang District
Open: 10 am-2 am **Tel:** 6593 7756

Bring It on Home

By Guo Yuandan

Fengxiwu, which just opened on January 1, has a new concept for sales of goods for the home - the store itself has the feel of a rustic, countryside house. Nearly every inch of the simple place, with a brick floor and whitewashed walls, is crammed with interesting goods to decorate or give as gifts.

The majority of goods for sale are chinaware and earthenware items, coming in a wide range of designs from the very ancient to the ultra-modern. All the porcelain comes from Jingdezhen, Jiangxi Province, long known as China's porcelain capital. Aside from classic blue and white vases, plates, bowls, dishes, jars and tea sets are also available, most priced between 50 and 500 yuan.

The more rustic pottery goods come from Dingzhou, Hebei province. While these pieces may not be as beautiful as the porcelain, they are more rugged and useful. Moreover, each piece, ranging in price from 200 to 600 yuan, is a one-of-a-kind.

Despite its limited size, this funky store offers items to fill almost any decorating need. Antique goods including furniture, cloth, lights, carpets and bamboo baskets offer simple designs and reasonable prices, most costing from 80 to 300 yuan. More modern items such as Yin-style jewelry and handbags and CD holders run around 100 yuan each.

Where: Fengxiwu, east of Yaxiu Market, Gongti Donglu, Chaoyang District
Open: 10:30 am - 8 pm **Tel:** 6416 9641

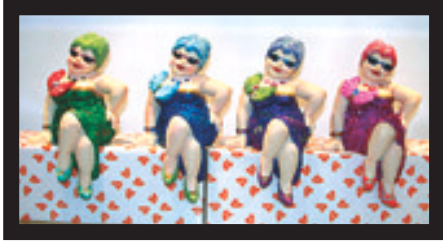
Gifts that Keep Giving

By Salinda

In time for picking up Spring Festival gifts for hard-to-please friends and family, the second Fengda Gifts store has opened in a convenient location in the Zhongyou Department Store in Xidan. The store is crammed with out-of-the-ordinary items, ranging from note holders to picture frames, mobile phone bases and toothbrush cups to thermometers, and other humorous goods for the home, office and elsewhere.

Many gifts are based on several basic images, the most predominant of which are robust women and boys and girls. One item looks like a sculpture of a big-boned odalisque, from whom extends an iron rod bearing three magnets for posting notes, name cards or photos. Another product along the large woman theme is an unusual mobile phone base. Boys and girls highlight the designs for normally mundane objects such as toothbrush holders, cups and CD shelves.

The store's owner, Chen Jiadian, says many of the items in the shop were originally created in Italy in the 1970s. Chen opened his first store in Wangfujing several months ago. Fortunately for gift givers around the city, both shops have very reasonable prices, with most items falling in the



Along the big-boned theme...



Goofy dolls, 20 - 200 yuan

ten to 200 yuan range.

Where: sixth floor of Zhongyou Department Store, Xidan, Xicheng District **Open:** 9 am - 9 pm **Tel:** 13051 119428

It's in the Bag



By Salinda

With everyone bundling up to make it through the frigid weather of the past week, fashion has largely taken a back seat to keeping warm. One way to make sure you still look good, even when enveloped in a Michelin man-like parka, is to have the right bag.

A good place to look for handbags that truly stand out is Glancden, a store located on the sixth floor of the Xindong'an shopping center. The brilliant surfaces of the store's bags make its window hard to miss.

The store's handbags share a metallic look, whether they are actually made from metal or from coated leather. Most of the leather designs are studded with diamond-like stones, so the bags have the appearance of large pieces of jewelry. The metal bags are made of gold plate or nickel with interesting textures, like small cubes or ripples. Color variety is somewhat limited but classic, with nearly all bags coming in gold, black, silver or combinations thereof.

One clever design element is that the end of the bags' straps are hidden inside, so their length can be adjusted to fit different occasions or needs.

Depending on style, size and materials, the eye-catching handbags range in price from 150 to several thousand yuan.

Where: sixth floor of Xindong'an Shopping Center, Wangfujing, Dongcheng District
Open: 9 am - 9 pm **Tel:** 13701 358951



Traditional Made-to-order Style

Mr. Pizza

This South Korean-based pizza purveyor opened its first branch in the capital in 2000 and now is preparing to open its fourth branch at Oriental Plaza on January 12.

Unlike its competitors, the dough in Mr. Pizza's pies is made by hand, not by machine. Dough spinners toss and stretch the dough to specific widths in the process that is the true art of pizza. The authentic dough is given a full 24 hours to rise, leading to airy, crisp results.

Another step Mr. Pizza takes to stand out is to use steel mesh screens, not solid pans, to bake its pizzas. This allows grease to drip through, leaving the crust dry, crispy and oil-free. For cheese freaks or diners out for something different, the restaurant's chefs will roll a bar of cheese into the end of the crust of a pie for an extra 25 yuan.

Pizzas come in three sizes: small, seven inches wide; regular, ten inches wide; and large, 14 inches wide. The most expensive pizza, the large chicken, goes for 85 yuan, while the same size Hawaiian Delight, topped with ham and pineapple, goes for 65 yuan. Not a bad price for a pizza large enough to feed three comfortably.

All Mr. Pizza shops offer free delivery within a four-kilometer radius. The chain also runs a special deal in which customers that save the receipts from seven regular or large pizzas can get one regular pizza for free.

Add: Mr. Pizza Jianguomen, first floor, East Ocean Center, 24A Jianguomenwai Dajie, Chaoyang District **Tel:** 6567 1918 **Open:** 11am - 11pm **Average cost:** 55 yuan per person



Mr. Pizza

Napoli

By Liang Hongling

Finding good Western food can be somewhat of a chore on the West side of town, with most choices being of the "fast" variety. One diamond in the rough is Napoli Pizza, a small restaurant that has been a secret favorite of students at Renmin University and other nearby schools for years.

The two-story restaurant, located a short walk north of the main gate to Renmin University, has an unassuming facade, but an interior far superior to many major pizza chains. Smooth piped-in music and tasteful art complete the comfortable feel.

Napoli offers 14 kinds of pizzas, from vegetarian to meat-heavy, all coming with a healthy dose of real mozzarella cheese. Prices are comparable to pies at Pizza Hut. The menu also offers pasta dishes, roast chicken and salad. The latter, however, is disappointing, full of canned fruits and vegetables.

Diners with a sweet tooth can get their fix with over 12 kinds of ice creams. For those who don't want to venture out into the cold, the restaurant offers free delivery for orders of over 100 yuan.

Add: No.171, Zhongguancun Dajie, Haidian District, just north of the main gate of Renmin University **Tel:** 6251 0180 **Open:** 8 am-midnight



Napoli

Schlotzsky's Deli

While this Texas-based chain claims to be the "Home of the Original Sandwich", it also offers an unusual take on pizza.

After entering Beijing in May 1998, there are now three Schlotzsky's restaurants in the city. All of them have comfortable décor and strict standards for food preparation. The chain takes special pride in the quality of its breads and pizza crust.

Pizzas come in only one size, eight inches wide, and range in price from 18.5 yuan for a vegetarian to 48 yuan for more exotic varieties. Sandwiches fetch similar prices. One selling point for the chain is that its food is generally low in fat and cholesterol while high in fiber, making it a solid choice for the health-conscious.

Add: Unit 206, second floor, International Trade Center Tower 2, Chaoyang District **Tel:** 6505 0806 **Open:** 11am - 2pm, 5pm - 9pm **Average cost:** 50 yuan per person



Schlotzsky's Deli



Photo provided by Origus

When the Moon Hits Your Eye...

By Wenlong

While China is undoubtedly the home to many of the most influential inventions in human history, the impulse to ascribe Chinese origins to great international creations can stretch a bit out of control.

A possible example is the argument that the traditional Italian food pizza was first baked up in this country. The story goes that pizza came from the Chinese meat pie, xian bing, which Marco Polo brought back to Italy after his travels in Asia. However, Polo forgot how to embed the meat filling into the dough, so Italians simply dropped the should-be fillings on top and then baked the whole thing, creating pizza.

While the veracity of this story is questionable at best, there can be no question that pizza is one of the western foods that has taken a firm hold among stomachs in Beijing since the opening of the first Pizza Hut restaurant

in 1990. Like their Western counterparts, pizza is particularly popular among local youth, a trend that has not gone unnoticed among restaurant owners. To tap into this market, crafty entrepreneurs have been pushing a new pizza concept, the less-than-40-yuan all-you-can-eat pizza buffet.

These restaurants have proven very popular, effectively dividing the pizza market into buffet-style restaurants and more traditional pie purveyors. Of the old school, Pizza Hut remains the leader, staying on top through solid marketing and new recipes. The chain's first promotion for this year is the 119-yuan set meal for two, available from January 13 to February 13.

Below, Beijing Today has selected six smaller-scale pizzerias and chains that offer different kinds of the classic pie. Most are priced to ensure even a modest budget is enough to get horrendously full.



Pizza Hut's new set meal

Photos by Wang Yong / Li Shuzhuan

Buffet-style

Origus: Original Pizza Works

This company introduced the idea of buffet-style pizza eating to China. The owners of the chain are two young Chinese that returned from studying in the US with dreams of riches from all-you-can-eat pizza. Those dreams have come true over the past four years as the chain exploded, with 15 outlets currently in operation, mostly in the northern part of the city.

The restaurants' main selling point is the low price of 39 yuan per person for all-you-can-eat pizza, salad, snacks and refillable drinks. Add pop music and funky décor to the equation and it's no wonder the chain is so popular among Beijing youth.

Origus outlets make 20 kinds of pizzas, and buffets even include such items as cheesecake and sushi.

Add: Second floor, Shuma Dasha Tower 1, No. 12 Guanghua Lu, Chaoyang District **Tel:** 6586 8707 **Open:** 11am - 2pm, 5pm - 9pm



Origus

Holiday Pizza

A direct competitor with Origus Pizza Works, this chain offers 21 kinds of Italian-style pizzas and a wide range of salads, drinks and snacks for a self-service price of 39 yuan. The restaurants fail to stand out in terms of décor or pizza flavors, but manage to keep customers coming with clever promotions. Founded at the end of 2001, Holiday Pizza is a 100-percent local company that now operates four restaurants around the city.

Pizza can also be ordered per pie at 40 yuan for a nine-inch and 60-yuan for a 12-inch. Clearly, however, the buffet offers more pizza bang for the buck, as ordering two self-service meals is rewarded with a coupon for one free meal good until February.

Add: No. 18 Xisi Nandajie, Xicheng District **Tel:** 6653 3978 **Open:** 10:30am - 2:30pm, 5pm - 10:30pm



Holiday Pizza

Pizza Select

This restaurant along the South Second Ring Road is the newest entrant in the all-you-can-eat pizza battle royale. While its price is the same as its competitors, 39 yuan per person for buffet, it has earned a reputation for relatively high-quality food and held its own against a Pizza Hut restaurant less than one kilometer away.

The store whips up 20 kinds of pizzas, including specialties like the Salami Sausage, which is loaded with fresh salami and cheese. The pizzas can be ordered on their own at 55 to 70 yuan for a 12-inch pizza, or can be eaten as part of the buffet, which includes an extensive salad bar, 14 kinds of soup, cookies and a wide selection of beverages.

Customers that eat ten buffets will be rewarded with a free trip to the restaurant. Those that scarf down 50 buffet meals get a VIP card that grants a 15 percent discount on all orders for one year. Though there is only one Pizza Select so far, this pizzeria is poised to enter chain status in the near future.

Add: Building 3, Pu'an Beili, Fengtai District **Tel:** 6765 9753 **Open:** 11am - 2pm, 5pm - 9:30pm



Pizza Select

The Art of Collotype



Painter Li Keran is known for combining sketching with traditional Chinese painting, but this exhibition includes both Li Keran's sketches and works by many other famous master painters. It is also an opportunity to show people the art of collotype, which is a limited edition print made from the original painting. Collotype is the closest you'll get to the original thing, so it's also an alternative to collecting the painting you love, but can't have.

Where: Creation Gallery, north end of Ritan Donglu, Chaoyang
When: January 11-24, 10 am-7 pm
Admission: free **Tel:** 8561 7570.

Huangshan by Li Keran

Movies

Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon

Directed by Ang Lee, Starring Zhang Zhi Yi, Chow Yun-Fat and Michelle Yeoh. During the Qing Dynasty, two women, one an acclaimed martial arts master, and the other, a spoiled young rich girl, struggle against their fate. Chinese with English subtitle.

Where: Cherry Lane Movies, 29 Liangmaqiao Lu, (east of the 21st Century Theater) Chaoyang **When:** January 10, 8 pm **Admission:** 40 yuan **Tel:** 6430 1398 **Email:** michael@cherrylanemovies.com.cn



The five-year old Pu Yi renounced his throne

The Last Emperor

Directed by Bernardo Bertolucci. John Lone plays the grown-up Pu Yi, and Peter O'Toole plays his British mentor, Reginald Johnston. Part of it was filmed in the Forbidden City. It tells the whole life of the last emperor—Pu Yi, of the Qing Dynasty. It won nine Oscars in 1987, including Best Picture, Best Director, and Best Editing.

Where: Italian Embassy Cultural Office **When:** January 16, 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6532 2187

Dead Man

Directed by Jim Jarmusch, starring Johnny Depp, Neil Young. At the end of the 19th century, one poor young man goes West in search of golden America, but his idealistic quest soon transforms him into a lonely desperado. English with Chinese subtitles.

Where: Space for Imagination **When:** January 11, 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6279 1280

Ice Age

Directed by Chris Wedge and Carlos Saldanha. Diego, a sabre-toothed tiger, Manny, a woolly mammoth, Sid, a stupid sloth, and Scat, an acorn-loving squirrel are forced to migrate south to warmer climates. Along their journey, the four heroes fight the frosty elements of the impending Ice Age to return a human child to its father. Chinese with English subtitles.

Where: local cinemas **When:** till January 31

Kate and Leopold

Directed by James Mangold. Kate McKay (Meg Ryan) is a modern-day executive, a 21st century woman driven to succeed in the corporate world. Leopold (Hugh Jackman), Third Duke of Albany, is a charming bachelor in the 19th century. Each has grown weary of waiting for love. But when a dramatic twist of fate lands Leopold in present-day New York, they must confront the prospect of a love affair 100 years in the making. Chinese with English subtitles.

Where: local cinemas **When:** till January 31

The Pureland

Directed by Pu Cheng, Cheng Ye is the head of the underworld. After years of life as an outlaw, he decides to live an ordinary life. But it is not as easy as he thinks. This is the film's premiere. And director Pu Cheng will come to talk with you. Chinese with English subtitles.

Where: 6 floor, Wangfujing Bookstore **When:** January 11, 1 pm **Tel:** 6238 3332

Parties

Rocking

This Saturday, Brain Failure, punk rockers extraordinaire, will hit the café. Sunday, Army Worker (Gongbin) joins up with bubbly pop rock all-girl outfit Wild Strawberries (Ye Caomei). The night of January 15 features a trio of punk bands spanning the spectrum. Brain Failure comes again, and the grrrls of Hang on the Box (Gua Zai Hezi Shang) play angry-in-a-funny-kind-of-way rock and Pk14 drops post-punk neo-Fugazi rock. The next night, Prog-metal lotharios Spring and Autumn (Chun Qiu) and hard rockers Candy Gun join forces.

Where: CD café, south of Agriculture Exhibition Center, Chaoyang **When:** 9 pm **Admission:** 30 yuan **Tel:** 6501 8877 ext 3032

What's up at What!

Sunday Mohawks will come to catch Mi San Dao, Kill Tomorrow and assorted others. Rock outfit Quasimodo humps to ring your bell next Tuesday.

Where: What, opposite north gate of Business and Economics University, Chaoyang **When:** 9 pm **Admission:** 20 yuan **Tel:** 3910 209249

Gather up, Girls

The night of bands featuring females, including Wild Strawberries, Happy Street, Fall Insex, Color and others.

Where: Starting bar, opposite the west gate of Beijing Space and Aviation University, Haidian **When:** January 11, 9 pm **Admission:** adults 30 yuan, students 20 yuan **Tel:** 8233 2264

CMCB and Miserable Faith

Tonight Rap metal superstars CMCB will perform. Sunday old school rap metal demigods Miserable Faith (Tongku De Xinyang) will come to rock at night.

Where: Get Lucky, 500 meters east of the south gate of University of International Business and Economics, Chaoyang **When:** 9 pm **Admission:** adults 60 and 30 yuan, students 40 and 20 yuan **Tel:** 6429 9109, 6420 4249

Last Chance

MIDI Music Festival will end on Saturday. Zi Yue, Sha Zi (Sand) and Shou Ren (Thin Man) will bring you the magic of music.

Where: 2nd exhibition hall of Nongzhanguan, Chaoyang **When:** January 11, 8-10 pm **Tel:** 6259 0007, 6259 0101 **Website:** www.midischool.com.cn

Stage

Peking Opera

Peking Opera is on stage this week. Programs include *Hujianghuang* (Hu Village), *Naolonggong* (Play the Dragon King's Palace), and *Tiannvshanhua* (Fairy Spray Flowers).

Where: Zhengyici Theatre, 220 Xiheyuan Dajie, Xuanwu **When:** January 10-11, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 100, 150, 200, 280 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7673 ext 198

Wild Swan

A children's story. Starring Zhang Yanlin, Lu Guirong, Wang Xiaochan, An Daba, Yang Xiangguo, Zhang Bing, Wang Jingwen, Hu Jinping and Guo Xiuyun, performed by Hebei Opera.

Where: Chang'an Grand Theatre, 7 Jianguonei Dajie, Dongcheng **When:** January 13-16, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 60, 80, 180 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7750 ext 508

Light Up a Thousand Households

Directed by Lin Zhaoxia and Li Liuyi, starring popular TV entertainer Song Dandan. This hilarious comedy celebrates the daily life changes of ordinary people.

Where: Capital Theatre **When:** till January 21, 7:15 pm **Admission:** 80, 100, 120, 150, 200, 280 yuan; students 40, 60 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7750 ext 508

Exhibitions



Sea of flower by Zhao Mengge

Human Nature and Mother Earth

16 artists including Zhang Siyong, Leng Shaoqiang, Xiao Fangkai, Li Wenfeng, Sun Huili, Zhao Mengge, Zeng Hui, Su Ming and others exhibit the relationship between humans and the environment in a variety of painting techniques: oil painting, ink and wash painting, acrylic painting and print.

Where: New Millennium Art Gallery, second floor, Diyang Building, 2 Dongsanhuan Beilu Chaoyang **When:** January 16-February 10, 9 am-6 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8453 6193



Look by Zhang Qitian

Kuang Han and Friends

Broad-line pencil sketches by Kuang Han will be on exhibit until the end of this month, along with oil paintings by Han Xuejun, Liu Baomin, and Li Huiyang. New artists Zhang Qitian and Yu Da have also added their work to the collection. As usual, watercolor artists always have a place in the gallery.

Where: East Hall of Wanfung Gallery, 136 Nanchizi Dajie Dongcheng **When:** till January 30 **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6523 3320



Painting By Yu Xiaodong

Folk Art

Exhibition featuring works by Li Le, Liu Chunming, Wang Luxia, Lu Tianning and Yang Yang. Li Le's works portray figures in traditional Chinese realistic painting characterized by fine brushwork and attention to detail. Lu Tianning paints the lives of people in Tibet.

Where: Qin Gallery, Huaweili Enjoy Paradise 1-1E (North of Beijing Curio City) Chaoyang **When:** January 15-21, 9:30 am-7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8779 0461



Wish By Geng Wanyi

Scenery of Tibet

These oil paintings by Geng Wanyi feature the landscapes and costumes of Tibet.

Where: Fa Fa Gallery, Jingyu Wanhao Hotel, 98 Xisanhuan Beilu, Haidian **When:** January 3-15, 9 am-10 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8430 2587.

Human and Landscape

The Greek Embassy is staging a photo exhibition featuring well-preserved traditions, landscapes and people in Greece. The photographs were taken by

Greek artists between 1930 and 1960, while the country was undergoing a modernization process sometimes remembered today for its negative impact on nature.

Where: Jintai Art Museum, 1 Nongzhanguan Nanlu, inside Chaoyang Park **When:** till January 20, 9 am-5 pm **Tel:** 6501 9441, 6532 1713

Ten Years

Zhuang Hui, a Beijing based artist, presents 100 specially-selected color photographs from a collection taken while he was producing his famous black and white prints of massive Chinese work units. Zhuang presents the pictures at face value, simply hanging them side by side for "what they are." His artistic focus is on the everyday, banal life of people and places.

Where: Courtyard Gallery, 95 Donghuanmen Dajie **When:** January 12-February 28, 10 am-5 pm **Tel:** 6526 8882

Oil Exhibition

Xu Weixin, is an oil painting teacher at Guangzhou Art Academy. His faded portraits of dank apartment hallways and Tibetan villagers are strikingly realistic. But there is also stranger subject matter, such as naked men wrapped in cellophane.

Where: Hanmo Gallery **When:** January 11-23, Tuesday-Friday 1-8 pm and Saturday-Sunday, noon-8 pm **Tel:** 6416 6254, 6416 6273

Collection Exhibition

The exhibition features a collection of video, photography and oil paintings. These artists are all young, including Zhang Dongliang, Xia Xing, Xia Jianguo, Guan Shi.

Where: China Art and Archives and Warehouse **When:** Wednesday-Sunday, 1-6 pm **Tel:** 8456 5152

Yves Klein, Niki de Saint Phalle and more

The 13 names represented in this exhibit could very well be the short list of major French contemporary artists. Those represented include Arman, who does installations involving fused pieces of junk, and Le Grand Wrapper Christo, who technically, is only part-French.

Where: China Millennium Monument Art Museum A9, Fuxing Lu, Haidian **When:** till January 18, 8:30 am-5:30 pm **Admission:** 10 yuan **Tel:** 6851 3322

Music

Classical Music

Performed by China Scientist Society Chorus, a series of foreign and Chinese songs, including *Cuckoo Song*, *It is May*, *Love of Hometown*, *Half the Moon Rising*, *Pastoral* and others will be performed.

Where: Concert Hall of China National Library, Zhongguancun Nandajie **When:** January 12, 2:30 pm **Admission:** 30, 40 yuan **Tel:** 8854 5520, 6841 9220

Beethoven's Best

Led by pianist and conductor Shi Shucheng, the musicians of China Philharmonic Orchestra will perform Beethoven's immortal works including Piano Concerto No 2 in B Flat Major, Op 19 and Symphony No 2 in D Major, Op 36.

Where: Century Theatre, 49 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang **When:** January 17, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 30, 60, 120, 180, 220, 300 yuan **Tel:** 6466 4805, 6462 8470

Activities

Burns Supper

The Caledonian Society will commemorate Scotland's bard, Robert Burns, at a special Burns Supper. Members have priority until 11th January, after which non-members may apply for tickets. Formal dress required. Dance practice on January 16 at the Holiday Inn Lido Country Club at 7 pm.

Where: In the Ming Ballroom of the Hilton Hotel, Dongsanhuan Beilu, Chaoyang **When:** January 16, 7 pm (for dance practice) January 25, 7 pm (for Burns Supper) **Admission:** 450 yuan **Tel:** 13911 095944 **Email:** Caledonian@163.com

Friday Night

Jr High Friday Night Fellowship meets every week and features horse riding, BBQ, games and singing.

Where: IAB Stable, just east of the Western Academy of Beijing, Liguan-ging, Chaoyang **When:** January 10, 5:30-8:30 pm **Admission:** 25 yuan **Tel:** 13901 143434

Sports

A to B Hike!

You will find this trail amazing. In summer it blooms with big bushes of lilac, fuchsias, and wild pear blossom.

In winter, it is dry and crisp with fallen leaves, blue sky and an unforgettable view. Driving time is two hours, walking time is three hours, return at 4:30 pm.

Where: Changping and Huairou, north of Beijing **When:** January 12, 8:30 am outside Starbucks at Lido Hotel, 9 am at Capital Paradise front gate **Admission:** adults 150 yuan, children 100 yuan **Tel:** 13701 003694 **Email:** bjhikers@yahoo.co.uk

Women Footballers Wanted

China Football Club is currently organizing football activities for women to begin in early 2003. All nationalities, playing abilities are welcome

Email: play@wangguoqunxing.com **Tel:** 6417 0495

Performance



Russian National Ballet

The artists of the Russian National Ballet are simply superb — their breathtaking physical ability combines grace with glamour for a glittering show... Sleeping Beauty will be performed on January 14-16, Swan Lake on January 12-13.

Where: Poly Theatre, 14 Dongzhimen Dajie, Dongcheng **When:** January 12-16, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 100, 200, 300, 500, 800, 1000, 1200 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7673 ext 508

After Going Worldly

The graduation work of students of the Directing Department of China Central Drama Institute. A monk and Buddhist nun fall in love and flee to escape the temples and return to a worldly life.

Where: Experimental Theatre of China Central Drama Institute, Dongmianhua Hutong, Dongcheng **When:** January 10, 7:15 pm **Admission:** 30, 50, 80 yuan **Tel:** 6407 4406, 6404 5648 ext 8041

Service

Culture Pass

Ticket passes for 72 Beijing museums, parks and other scenic spots are now on sale in the city. These special passes cost 60 yuan for complete access to the entire list of sights, almost one 20th of the normal price of 1300 yuan. They are issued once every year, valid from January 1 to December 31, 2003. Simply present the ticket at any of the listed sites and pass right through to visit. The Prince Gong Mansion, the Chinese Science and Technology Museum, and some suburban destinations such as Simatai Great Wall, Yanqihu Scenic Spot and Baiyangdian in Hebei Province are included among the 72 sites.

Where: Luxun Museum **When:** 9 am-3 pm **Tel:** 6616 4080

Lecture



Feitian is a good omen in folklore

Dunhuang Caves

The Dunhuang Caves in Gansu Province date from 366 AD, containing Buddhist statues, frescoes, and valuable manuscripts. Zhao Shengliang, a research fellow of the History Research Room in the Chinese Academy of Social Science, will tell the story of Flying Apsaras (Feitian). In Chinese.

Where: China National Library, Zhongguancun Nandajie **When:** January 11, 9:15-11:15 am **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8854 5593

We are glad to receive your feedback. We will print employment, language exchange and accommodation info for individuals. Feel free to email us at bjtoday-info@ynet.com or call 6590 2522
By Guo Yuandan

God of the Snowy Mountain

Kagebo Peak

By Zhang Qingning/

Liang Hongling/Huang Lisha

I'll never forget the towering mountains, lush forest, azure sky, fresh air, and those kind people living in the plateaus. I still pine for their mysterious existence and peculiar way of life.

—A French explorer

The sun was scorching and I was impatient to get to Yun'nan, a place I had heard about for years. Yun'nan gets its name from its location to the south of Yun Ling (Cloudy Mountain). I was heading for the northwest of Yun'nan province, to Deqin County (德钦县) which is well known for its Meili Snow Mountain (梅里雪山).

Deqin County

Setting out from Zhongdian (中甸), capital of Diqing Autonomous Prefecture by bus and bumping along for about 184 km, I finally arrived at Deqin at 4pm. Our bus passed through the town of Benzilan (奔子栏乡), which means "golden sandbank" in Tibetan. Benzilan used to be an important trading center for tea and horses, and is famous for its capable Ma Jiaozi (horse drivers). The Tibetan culture in this strategic pass of southwest China bears unique regional characteristics. Local costumes have absorbed the styles of Yi, Mongolia and Pumi ethnic minorities. The area is also famous for its wooden bowls, containers for zanba (a Tibetan food) and roasted qingke barley.

At 3,400 meters above sea level, Deqin is the highest and northernmost county in Yun'nan province. When Hu Xia, a local official, left his post in 1877, he erected a "Deqin stele" on which he named the county "Shengping", which means, "put on a show of peace and prosperity". At dusk, the streets are lively and noisy, with the villagers bargaining with merchants to buy Songrong (a kind of mushroom which is also popular in Japan).

Dongzhulin Temple

Dongzhulin Temple (东竹林寺), built in 1667 and located in Shusong village (书松村) of Benzilan, was originally named "Chongchongcuogang", which means "temple by a crane lake". It is considered to be one of the 13 great Lama temples in China. The four-story main hall is made of wood. In front of the temple stand statues of Kaba, the founding father of the Gelu School, his disciple Damarenqing and the first Panchen Lama, Kezhujie. The 6.8 meter-high figure of Qiangba is on the second floor together with a figure of Sakyamuni, which is 10.5 meters high. The crown, the pearls, and gems inlaid in the chest of the figure are presents from Sela Temple in Lhasa. Another treasure in Dongzhulin Temple is a huge Tangka, a



Mingyong Glacier



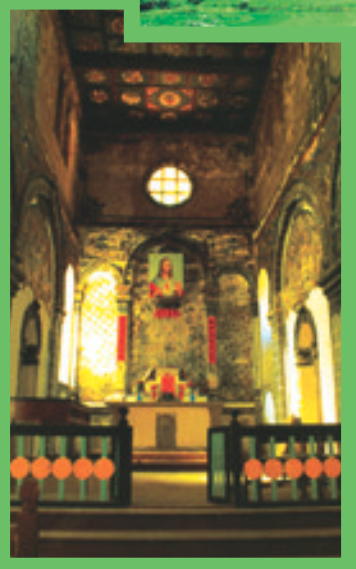
Two old ladies are praying in Feilai Temple.



Feilai Temple



Shusongnigu Temple



Meili Snow Mountain

Winter and spring are the ideal times to view Meili Snow Mountain.

It's in the west of Deqin County and the best spot to view it is Feilai Temple (飞来寺), 10km from Deqin County. Meili Snow Mountain has 13 peaks whose average height is 6,000 meters above sea level, named "Taizi Shisan Feng" (太子十三峰), which means 13 princes peaks. Among them, Kagebo (卡格博峰) is the highest peak in Yunnan province, 6,740 meters above sea level.

Kagebo, which means "white snow mountain" in Tibetan, is considered "the god of the snowy mountains" and a sacred place of pilgrimage for Tibetan Buddhism. A local tale tells how Kagebo became the patron saint of Jiajuba, a branch of Ningma School. Originally Kagebo was an evil spirit with 9 heads and 18 bodies. After being converted by Budda Padmasambhava, Kagebo became a senior general of King Gesaer. Worshipped by Tibetan people, usually Kagebo rode a white horse with a sword in

hand. His majestic appearance was similar to that of the peak. It is said that if you climb to the top of the Potala Palace, you will see the shadow of Kagebo through the colorful clouds. Every year during the end of autumn and the beginning of winter, thousands of Tibetan Buddhists walk to Kagebo. During the year of the sheep in the Tibetan calendar, the number of adherents will multiply and the spectacle is very grand.

Kagebo Peak has been described as "the most beautiful peak in the world" by Joseph F. Rocker, the renowned American explorer and botanist. In 1986, the Panchen Lama Jianzeng once held rituals there. As usual, Meili Snow Mountain was enveloped in layers of clouds and mist. But as soon as the Panchen Lama recited scriptures and sprinkled some holy water, the clouds parted and Kagebo emerged from the mist. This has become a widespread legend among local people.

Mingyong Glacier (明永冰川) sits at the foot of Kagebo Peak and looks like a long piece of white silk. Running from 5,500

meters down to 2,700 meters, only 800 meters above Lancang River, Mingyong is one of the few low altitude glaciers in the world. There is a 40km ride between Deqin and Mingyong Village, and then you can walk or rent a horse (60 yuan) to get to the glacier.

In the south of Kagebo Peak is a waterfall, named "Yubengshenpu" (holy collapsing rain), coming down from a 1,000m high cliff. It is said that to be drenched by the water here will bring you good luck.

Kagebo is still a "virgin peak", unconquered by mountaineers. Since the first effort was made by a British climbing team in 1902, Americans, Japanese, and Chinese climbers have all tried to scale the mountain, but all attempts have ended in failure. A joint effort by Chinese and Japanese climbers to reach the summit in January 1991 ended in tragedy when all the team's members died in an accident. Their remains were not found until July 1998. An old man told us with a warning tone, "Kagebo is a god. How can human beings

step on a god?"

Cizhong Church

Cizhong Roman Catholic Church (茨中教堂), a Gothic building, can be found in Cizhong Village, 96km away from Cizhong County. Constructed by French missionaries, it used to be the main church in Yunnan parish. Two trees planted by the church's first priest over 80 years ago are still standing in the yard. The porch is made of stone, on which a 20-meter-high clock tower was built. Though it was built years ago, you still can feel yesterday's magnificence inside the church. Among the highlights of the interior are the Virgin Mary images mounted on blue and yellow Tangka, hung on the posts. This mixture of western and eastern religious design is deliberate. It seems that everything here is telling you that western and eastern culture can mix harmoniously.

According to Wu Gongding, the priest of Cizhong church, there are 123 families in Cizhong Village, among which 89 families are Catholic. Local people are free to choose their own religious belief. Wu invited us to his home where we drank the fragrant French wine that is brewed locally. Cizhong church still keeps the brewing tools left behind by French missionaries. The vines planted in Cizhong were brought all the way from France. In Cizhong, every family has a custom of brewing and drinking their own grape wine. Who would have thought that in a remote Chinese village, people would be drinking delicious French wine every day?

Getting there

A three-hour flight to Kunming from Beijing, followed by a 20-hour bus trip (134 yuan) from Kunming to Zhongdian, the transfer station (buses depart Kunming Panjiawan, 昆明潘家湾汽车站, and Nanyao Bus Station, 南窑汽车站, from 1pm to 6pm every day), and finally a 9-hour bus journey from Zhongdian to Deqin (23 yuan, 2 buses depart Zhongdian Bus Station from 7:30am to 8:30am). To Meili Snow Mountain and Cizhong church, renting cars is the only choice.

Important reminders

Tourists with heart disease and hypertension are discouraged from making the journey as the altitude may worsen the condition.

The best time to visit is from January to May.

Bring warm clothes and cold and stomach medicine. Taking Hong Jing Tian (红景天) and Ji Gan (肌甘), Tibetan herbal medicine, or the local buttered tea two days ahead of the trip may prevent an adverse reaction to the altitude.

Photos by Liu Guoming/Chai Ling/
Zhang Qingning